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PART XV.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF PERSIA.

July to September 1908.

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177	" ..	233 Tel.	20,	Siri oxide. Reports telegram from Consul-General at Bushire respecting. He has heard of no inquiries by foreigners ..	107
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187	Mr. Marling	236 Tel.	21,	Hormuz Oxide Concession. Drawbacks to supporting Malcolm against the Moin-ut-Teffar. Difficulties of situation. Requests further information ..	111
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197	" "	..	22,	Zil-es-Sultan. Transmits telegram to Viceroy of 18th July. To repeat Nos. 162 and 163 to Tehran ..	115
198	Mr. O'Beirne	125 Tel.	23,	Situation at Tabreez. Conversation with Minister for Foreign Affairs, who defends Russian Consul-General, but fears intervention may be unavoidable ..	116
199	To Mr. Marling	184 Tel.	23,	Taona murders. Refers to No. 144. Agrees to method of capture, but not to issue of instructions until subsequent procedure for trial, &c., has been issued ..	116
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203	Mr. Marling	241 Tel.	24,	Situation at Tabreez. Reports 200 casualties ..	118
204	" "	242 Tel.	24,	Turco-Persian frontier. Rumour that Persian Government has appealed to Germany for assistance ..	118
205	" "	243 Tel.	24,	Financial difficulties. Question of a loan, and conditions to be attached to it. Conference of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Russian Minister, and Financial Adviser to take place ..	118
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207	To India Office	..	24,	Russian Military Attaché in Seistan. Refers to No. 161. Concurs as to postponing representations until decision respecting Meshed, and as to desirability of abolishing both posts ..	119
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213	" "	248 Tel.	25,	Hormuz red oxide. Refers to No. 212. If the necessity were to arise, would there be any objection to ask for assistance of Russian Legation in resisting German application for concession? ..	121
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291	India Office	6.	Branch of Imperial Bank at Nasratabad. Refers to No. 79. Repeats doubts as to advantage of existing arrangements. Cannot recommend continuance of subsidy	194
292	Mr. Marling	.. 268 Tel.	8.	Bastis at Gulahek. All but twelve have left. Those at Turkish Embassy left on 6th	194
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298	Messrs. Strick and Co. to Mr. Mallet	10.	Hormuz oxide. Refers to No. 297. Regrets negotiations should have fallen through. States objections to Messrs. Ellinger's conditions	196
299	Mr. Marling	.. 271 Tel.	11.	Bakhtiari Road. Refers to Part XIII, No. 402. Gives alternative proposals suggested by Vice-Consul	197
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301	" "	.. 205 Tel.	11.	Horses for Shiraz escort. Expenditure recommended in No. 293 is sanctioned	198
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304	Persian Transport Company	11,	Messrs. Lynch's shed at Shetlilich. Refers to Part XIV, No. 237. Transmits letter from Ahwaz Agent describing obstruction of Monia-et-Tejar. Urges that Persian Government should at once prevent him interfering	199
305	Mr. Marling ..	272 Tel.	12,	Consular towns in South Persia. Refers to No. 300. Vice-Consul's prudence can be relied on. Is cautioning him	201
306	To Mr. Marling ..	206 Tel.	12,	Bunder Abbas Consular guard. Gives substance of No. 287, and asks if he concurs. ..	201
307	India Office	13,	Tagna murders. Refers to No. 144. Transmits telegram from Government of India, dated 11th August, stating that they see no objection to issue of proposed instructions	201
308	Mr. Marling ..	273 Tel.	13,	Siri Red Oxide Concession. Report from Residency Agent at Lingah as to Moh sending to examine oxide on the spot, and as to Abdullah Zelladari's attitude ..	202
309	To Sir A. Nicolson ..	250 Confidential	13,	M. de Hartwig and <i>coup d'Etat</i> in Tehran. Transmits Nos. 259, 267, and 310. No formal complaint to be made of M. de Hartwig's conduct, but matter might be mentioned after his removal	202
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ERRATA.

Page 1, No. 2, line 1. For "to-day" read "yesterday," and for "27th ultimo" read "29th ultimo."
Page 7, No. 16, line 1. For "yesterday" read "30th ultimo"; line 9, for "26th ultimo" read "27th ultimo."
Page 39, No. 60, line 1. For "9th ultimo" read "6th ultimo."
Page 59, No. 68, date line. For "July 28" read "June 28."
Page 72, No. 90, line 1. For "6th instant" read "7th instant."
Page 112, No. 188, line 12. For "No. 98 of the 4th May" read "No. 94 of the 8th May."
Page 119, No. 206, line 1. For "23rd July" read "22nd July."
Page 195, No. 295, line 1. For "No. 167" read "No. 267."
Page 414, No. 610, line 32. For "adequate commercial success" read "adequate prospects of commercial success."

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Persia.

PART XV.

[22681]

No. 1.

Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received July 1.)

Sir, 28, Oxford Street, Manchester, June 30, 1908.

WE confirm ours of the 16th instant, to which we shall be glad to have your reply as soon as possible. From the Mountudjar's last letter he appears to be very uneasy as to the protection which he can rely upon receiving from His Majesty's Government, and he seems to fear, amongst other things, that this protection might not be afforded to him in case his interests are in conflict in other matters with those of Messrs. Lynch.

We take the liberty of referring you to Mr. Marling's letter to your goodself No. 66 of the 24th March this year, in which he points out that the Mountudjar was then afraid of placing himself in the power of His Majesty's Legation for fear that pressure might be brought to bear upon him in other questions where his interests conflict with those of other British subjects, as, for instance, those of Messrs. Lynch. Mr. Marling suggested in his letter that it would be advisable to persuade him that he could count on the fullest measure of your support, and that you would not, and could not, in respect of other questions, make any improper use of the position of dependency on your goodself in which he would be placed as regards the Oxide Company. It appears to us in the present state of political affairs in Persia that if His Majesty's Government is in a position to adequately protect him it is highly desirable, in the interests of all concerned, that Mr. Marling be requested by cable to reassure him on this point, if he has not already done so, and we shall be glad to hear from you as soon as possible, so that we may write him fully what has been done.

We are, &c.

(Signed) ELLINGER AND CO.

[22597]

No. 2.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 107.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 1, 1908.

MY telegram No. 105 of to-day and your telegram No. 190 of the 27th ultimo: Persian crisis.

I had this evening an interview with M. Isvolsky, but, in view of the Cossacks having apparently been withdrawn (as I gather from Mr. Marling's telegram No. 173 of the 30th ultimo) and of M. de Hartwig having made representations, I refrained, of course, from making the whole communication which your telegram indicated. I contented myself with informing his Excellency that I expected further instructions from you to-morrow, as I did not think the incident was yet closed in spite of the withdrawal of the Cossacks. I communicated to him meanwhile two Memoranda, one of which recapitulates the facts as given in Mr. Marling's telegrams from the 28th, while the other fully states your view of the matter and repeats your assurances. I also

took this opportunity of verbally explaining to his Excellency the indignity which the action of the Russian Colonel had placed on His Majesty's Legation, directing at the same time his attention to the fact that the situation was one which M. de Hartwig seemed to fail to realize. I observed that it appeared surprising that at a time when the Legation was being actually molested by Cossacks M. de Hartwig should be reproaching Mr. Marling for allowing bast. In reply, his Excellency stated that the desired representations had been made by M. de Hartwig and had apparently been successful, for which I expressed my thanks. M. Isvolsky then went on to say that from M. de Hartwig's reports it appeared that Mr. Marling had given a much exaggerated account of the incident, and he also maintained that the Legation staff had openly sided with the revolutionaries, although he admitted that this may possibly have occurred without Mr. Marling's knowledge. His Excellency said that it was manifest that much unfortunate ill-feeling existed between Mr. Marling and the Russian Minister, and he considered that a good deal of blame attached to each. Although I disputed these statements, my arguments evidently failed to convince his Excellency. I should mention that during the whole course of the conversation the Foreign Minister displayed the utmost anxiety to maintain the co-operation in Persia of the British and Russian Governments. He observed, in conclusion, that in regard to the present difficulty it was absolutely necessary that a way of acting together should be found. I am confident that M. Isvolsky is just as anxious as His Majesty's Government that co-operation between the two Governments should not be prevented by the present incident. It is at the same time difficult for his Excellency wholly to disbelieve the positive and circumstantial reports which he receives of the alleged intrigues of members of the Legation against the Shah and on behalf of the popular party.

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No. 3.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 108.)

(Telegraphic.) R.
PERSIA.*St. Petersburg, July 1, 1908.*

I have had most satisfactory interview with Minister. He handed me *aide-mémoire* stating that if the troops surrounding Legation acted by direction of Russian Colonel, this occurred independently of the Russian Government and of Russian Legation. *Aide-mémoire* thanks you for your assurances, and states that the Russian Government has no doubt of perfect loyalty of British Agents in Persia; that for its part Russian Government remains faithful to the *entente* between the two Governments respecting Persia and to principle of non-intervention; and that renewed instructions have been sent to Russian Minister to observe most friendly attitude towards British Legation.

(Confidential.)

The instructions to M. de Hartwig were, M. Isvolsky told me, of a most categorical nature, and pointed out that after all the question of "bast" was merely of secondary importance. His Excellency was unaware that Colonel Liakhoff had been appointed Governor, and stated that the instructions to that officer did not contemplate such a step being taken. He added, in confidence, that the standing instructions to the Colonel did not permit of his taking command of the Cossack brigade on active service. Minister for Foreign Affairs is apparently quite prepared to give his support to a demand on the part of His Majesty's Government for satisfaction.

[22732]

No. 4.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 109.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, July 1, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 185.

I have received Memorandum stating Russian Government agree to join proposed representation to [group undecipherable]; Shah to permit [? Zil-es-Sultan], with family and dependents, to leave Persia with safeguard for lives and property. They consider it, however, very desirable Zil-es-Sultan should solemnly confirm his engagements of April 1907, in a form to be agreed upon between British and Russian Representatives,

and should give them categorical promise to proceed at once to Europe when he has obtained permission to. Russian Government propose he should embark at Bushire as being the nearest port, and suggest a British ship might, if His Majesty's Government think necessary, be placed at his disposal, in order to prevent any attempt on his part to disembark elsewhere in Persia.

(Sent to Tehran.)

[22696]

No. 5.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 176.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

TABREEZ situation.

Telegram from Vice-Consul states that Karadaghi tribesmen are threatening the town, and he fears serious bloodshed if they enter it.

The local authorities are powerless, and bread is very scarce. The partisans of the Shah have looted several houses.

There is no doubt that the Shah is inciting the tribesmen, and it is possible that his object is to furnish a pretext for intervention on the part of Russia.

[22726]

No. 6.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

YOUR telegrams Nos. 130 and 131 of the 29th ultimo: General situation.

It is the intention of the Shah to send men of the most reactionary character (e.g., Ain-ed-Dowleh to Tabreez and Assaf-ed-Dowleh to Shiraz) to replace the existing Provincial Governors.

If the new elections are delayed three months the new Governors will have time to establish their position, and elections held under their auspices would be a farce.

[22727]

No. 7.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 179.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

SITUATION in Tehran. Your telegram No. 129 of the 29th ultimo.

So long as martial law is in force there will be no real confidence among the people, and the amnesty is generally regarded as intended to entice from their hiding places persons wanted by the Shah.

I believe that I could persuade a large proportion of the bastis to leave the Legation if martial law ceased, but they fear that at present they may be arrested under the terms of the Proclamation merely because they have taken bast at His Majesty's Legation.

[22724]

No. 8.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 180.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran July 1, 1908.

I HAVE to-day received following telegram from Tabreez:—

"With reference to my telegram No. 78, I have been informed by the Nationalists that unless I give protection to four of their leaders, who have been fighting all these days, they will refuse to lay down their arms and allow order to be restored. They state that they do not trust the Russian Consul-General, and they are determined to prevent the cavalry from entering the town to restore tranquillity. Serious bloodshed, and possibly active Russian intervention, may be brought about in this way; and with

a view to save life and property I feel it my duty, under the circumstances, to grant these men protection. Unless, therefore, I receive instructions to the contrary before noon I propose to do so."

In view of the instructions I have recently received from you, and which I have, I trust, correctly interpreted, I immediately replied that he must refuse admittance to these men in accordance with the firm resolution of His Majesty's Government not to intervene in internal affairs.

Telegram to which Acting Consul-General refers states that the Governor-General has taken bast in the French Consulate; that the Karadaghi Cavalry had come to support the partisans of the Shah, and that the Russian Consul-General hoped to restore order to day as a result of negotiations with both sides.

[22728]

No. 9.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 181.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

WHILE I was in Tehran yesterday the Russian Minister came to see me here. As I did not see him I went this morning to call on him.

M. de Hartwig was very anxious to explain everything away, especially Colonel Liakhoff's action, which he insinuated has been misrepresented by me. I thought him a good deal sobered, and he stated that he had absolutely refused to allow Colonel Liakhoff to accept the appointment of Governor of the town, and denied that the Proclamation announcing it had even appeared. Printed copies of the document in question are in my possession, and I am sending one to M. de Hartwig.

Though few of Russian Minister's explanations corresponded with dates or facts, I managed to make him admit that till the 27th ultimo the Persian Government took no action in reply to my protest against the troops placed round His Majesty's Legation. According to his assertions, however, everything to which objection could be taken had stopped on the 28th. As a matter of fact, however, until the evening of the 29th, or even during the night, four pickets, who constantly patrolled all roads round the Legation, were maintained at a distance of some 300 yards from the walls.

Mr. Churchill and the gholams are still the objects of his attacks, but he has nothing to support his accusations except hearsay evidence, and this it is impossible to refute, of course.

M. de Hartwig declares that Colonel Liakhoff's name no longer appears on Proclamations, but the situation does not appear to me essentially altered, as, according to the latest Proclamation, the maintenance of order in the town is intrusted to the Brigade of Cossacks. Moreover, as late as yesterday there appeared a severe police notice signed by him.

My interview with Russian Minister was perfectly friendly, and his Excellency professed great desire for frank relations. But I avoided as much as possible refuting the misstatements continually made by his Excellency.

[22729]

No. 10.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 182.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

SITUATION. Your telegram No. 139 of the 29th ultimo was somewhat delayed in transmission.

Mr. Churchill delivered the King's telegram to the Shah at 8 o'clock this morning.

A general rumour emanating from the Palace to the effect that I had been recalled was the immediate result.

His Majesty's gracious expression of confidence is very gratifying to me.

[22730]

No. 11.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 183.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 1, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram to Mr. O'Beirne, No. 198 of the 29th ultimo, respecting the Zil-es-Sultan, I am informed by M. de Hartwig that he sees no objection to the joint representation suggested, and that he has telegraphed to his Government to this effect.

Following is confidential:—

Incidentally M. de Hartwig said that it was the recommendation of His Majesty's Government that His Imperial Highness should go to Europe, in which case the Russian Minister thinks that he should do this without going to Ispahan first.

Presumably His Majesty's Government do not intend to urge the Shah to force the Zil-es-Sultan to go out of the country.

[22576]

No. 12.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 201.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 1, 1908.

PERSIAN Situation.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs should be informed of the instructions sent to Mr. Marling in my telegram No. 145 of to-day's date.

Our first idea was to demand that a detachment of Persian Cossacks, on whom lies the chief responsibility for the acts of which we have the right to complain, should render a salute to the British flag. In view of the fact, however, that Russian officers might be involved, and that we had no wish to take any action by which Russian prestige and feelings might be wounded, or to which Russia might feel herself bound to offer opposition, we refrained from formulating this demand without having advised the Russian Government. You should explain this to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, adding that we cannot help feeling that the responsibility for the action of the Cossacks towards His Majesty's Legation rests on Colonel Liakhoff, and that we think it ought to be recognized by the Russian Government that the demands made by us on the Shah have been designedly so formulated as to permit of the avoidance by Russia of an attitude towards them which would have the appearance of a breach in the good understanding existing between us. If the Officer Commanding the Brigade of Cossacks had been a Persian, we should certainly have demanded that he should be dismissed immediately, and that the regiment should offer a formal act of reparation. The great importance of our very moderate demands being complied with by the Shah should be impressed on M. Isvolsky. In case of non-compliance on the part of His Majesty, some action, the consequences of which it is difficult to foresee, must inevitably be taken by us in the Persian Gulf or the south of Persia.

Charges of intrigue against members of our Legation at Tehran ought not to be believed without proof, nor should they be permitted to disturb the good relations existing between the two countries. I cannot believe that they have any foundation except Persian falsehoods. We receive similar stories against the Russian Legation from Persian sources, but we attach no credence to them.

In order to show that there has been no exaggeration on Mr. Marling's part with regard to the treatment to which His Majesty's Legation has been subjected, the second paragraph of his telegram of yesterday's date (No. 173) should be quoted to M. Isvolsky.

Co-operation has been rendered difficult by the somewhat abrupt departure from the policy of non-intervention which has been made by the Russian officials at Tehran. This has not been resented by His Majesty's Government, nor have we on our part made the active part which has been played at Tehran by Russians an excuse for intervention. We still think the policy of non-intervention which was agreed upon last Christmas the wisest course, nor could we ourselves depart from it. It is, however, essential that proper respect should be shown for us by the Shah and the officers under him.

We trust that M. Isvolsky will respond by supporting our demands, which we have

[1599]

made studiously moderate in order to preserve this policy. For the moment this is the point of vital importance, and it would be deplorable if the action taken under stress of sudden emergencies by agents on the spot were allowed to disturb the policy of either Government, or to interfere with the working of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

[22576]

No. 13.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 145.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 1, 1908.

SITUATION at Legation.

With reference to my telegram No. 142 of the 30th ultimo, the following demands have been decided upon by His Majesty's Government:—

1. Cossacks and police to be withdrawn immediately from the approaches to the Legation. British subjects and servants to remain free from molestation at their hands.

2. After due notification is given, a full and formal apology to be tendered personally at His Majesty's Legation by the High Chamberlain and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Shah and the Persian Government respectively. Both officials to be in uniform.

3. Immediate release of all persons who have been arrested recently on their way to or from His Majesty's Legation when engaged in ordinary business.

4. A guarantee in writing for the property, lives, and persons of "bastis" to be given, and to be signed by the Shah.

5. A fair trial, in the presence of a member of His Majesty's Legation, to be given to any "bastis" charged with committing crimes, as distinguished from political offences.

You should present these demands to the Shah and the Persian Government, and say that they have been formulated by His Majesty's Government, who have carefully considered the grave situation which has been created by the repeated insults at the hands of the Cossack Brigade and the police to which, during a period of several days, His Majesty's Legation was exposed, and against which formal protests were made by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires. You should add that the restoration of the good relations which have hitherto existed between the two countries can only be effected by immediate compliance with these demands, and that if they are not accepted and fulfilled without delay His Majesty's Government will have no alternative save to take such measures as may appear most suitable in order to obtain the reparation to which they consider themselves entitled.

Before you present these demands to the Persian Government you should communicate them to your French and Russian colleagues. You should not, however, ask for their support, nor delay taking action.

[22724]

No. 14.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 146.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 1, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez.

I approve the instructions sent by you to His Majesty's Consul at Tabreez as reported in your telegram No. 180 of the 1st July.

[22871]

No. 15.

*M. Poklewski-Kozielecki to Foreign Office.—(Received July 2.)**Ambassade de Russie, Londres,
le Juillet, 1908.*

Cher Sir Charles,

VOICI la communication que je vous ai faite verbalement hier:—

"Ainsi qu'il résulte d'un télégramme du Vice-Consul de Russie à Urmiah, une enquête menée par lui conjointement avec son collègue Anglais a établi que les excès

commis sur le territoire Persan à la fin du mois de Mai avaient pour auteurs les Kourdes, pour la conduite desquels les Turcs doivent être tenus exclusivement responsables.

"Le Chargé d'Affaires de Russie à Constantinople a été chargé de faire part de ce télégramme à la Porte et de s'entendre avec son collègue de Grande-Bretagne, afin d'affirmer encore une fois avec insistance au Gouvernement Turc la nécessité de prendre sans retard des mesures efficaces en vue de mettre fin à un état de choses inadmissible."

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) S. POKLEWSKI-KOZIELECKI.

[22860]

No. 16.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 184.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 2, 1908.

BASTIS. Replying to your telegram No. 143 of yesterday, 66 refugees are now in the Legation. Since the 27th ultimo none have entered.

I have only now learnt that 15, and not 7, refugees gained admittance on the night of the 23rd June. This fact accounts for the difference between 66 and the approximate figure of 55 (see my telegrams Nos. 154 and 164). Some were active leaders of Enjumens, and nearly all were members. They include 3 priests, 5 deputies, 5 journalists, 6 emuehs, 6 merchants, and 41 tradesmen. It is suspected that merchants and tradesmen supplied funds.

No reply to my note mentioned in my telegram No. 159 of the 26th ultimo has, up to the present, been sent by the Persian Government.

[22873]

No. 17.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 185.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 2, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez.

According to reports from His Majesty's Vice-Consul, the Nationalists, at the instance of Russian Consul-General and Acting Governor, allowed Karadaghi horsemen to enter for the purpose of maintaining order in the town.

Looting was soon after started by the Shah's adherents, whereupon the Nationalist party called their forces together and decided to continue the struggle.

Vice-Consul anticipates serious outbreak, as there is no one to enforce order.

I have addressed a note to Minister for Foreign Affairs urging the issue of stringent orders to the local authorities.

[21936]

No. 18.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 202.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 2, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 167 of the 17th June on the subject of the Russian Military Attaché in Seistan.

Intention to increase Staff of Consulate in Seistan was denied by Russian Minister at Tehran, as reported in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 48 of the 19th February. Can you find out whether it is intended by Russian Government to appoint a Military Attaché there?

[22726]

No. 19.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 149.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 2, 1908.

APPOINTMENT of new Governors.

With reference to your telegram No. 178 of the 1st instant.

Until it can be shown that injury has been caused to British interests by the appointments in question, it would not be desirable for us to intervene in any way.

[22730]

No. 20.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 150.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 2, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

With reference to the telegram from St. Petersburg No. 100 of the 1st instant, and to your telegram No. 183 of the 1st instant.

We have no intention of requesting the deportation of the Zil by the Shah, but His Majesty is to be asked to allow him to leave the country, together with his family and those dependent on him, under proper safeguard for their property and lives.

In the first place the Zil should be informed of the action you are about to take in accordance with the suggestion which he himself made. You should then consult with the Russian Minister, and, in concert with him, make a representation to the Shah. So long as the Zil does not return to his country the guarantee as to his property should remain valid.

[22879]

No. 21.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.---(Received July 3.)

(No. 259.)

Sir,

Paris, July 1, 1908.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs informed the Heads of Missions this morning by telegraph that as he had to be in the Chamber he could not receive them to-day. I therefore sent him a message to say that I wished particularly to see his Excellency for the purpose of making to him an important communication on behalf of His Majesty's Government. He appointed 6 o'clock this evening; and, in order that he might have time to consider what should be his reply to the representations which I was instructed by your despatch No. 285 of the 29th June to make to his Excellency, I sent in the afternoon to his principal Private Secretary, for communication to him, the Memorandum of which I have the honour to transmit to you a copy herewith.*

M. Lomis, the Political Director, was with M. Pichon and remained during my interview with his Excellency.

As instructed by your despatch No. 285 of the 29th June and your telegram No. 78 of the 30th June, I imparted very fully to M. Pichon the information which His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran had telegraphed to you in regard to the situation at that capital, and the differences of view which had arisen between the Russian Minister and the British Chargé d'Affaires, and the communications which had passed between you and the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. I said that it was impossible for the Government of a Constitutional State such as England to support the Shah against his people. They had observed a strictly neutral attitude. They could not consent to hand over to the Persian authorities the Persians who, in fear of their lives, had sought an asylum in the British Legation, unless proper guarantees were forthcoming as to their treatment. If the Shah had unlimited power over them they might meet the same fate as the two prisoners at the Shah's camp whom His Majesty had caused to be strangled without proper trial. I also informed M. Pichon of the Shah's messages to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires and of the replies returned to them by Mr. Marling, and of the investment of the Legation by the Persian Cossacks under their Russian Colonel, who had been given full powers to do as he would, and of the

* Not printed

protests made by Mr. Marling and His Majesty's Government against the attitude and proceedings of that Russian officer. I also described to M. Pichon the communication which His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg had been directed to make to M. Isvolsky in regard to the question of the Persian refugees at the British Legation and the action of Colonel Liakhoff, and the serious situation which would be created if he persisted in his proceedings; for the good understanding between Russia and England in Persia would be endangered if His Majesty's Government had to exact from the Shah's Government by force reparation for the affront put on His Majesty's Legation by the proceedings of the Cossacks.

I found that the telegram which Mr. Marling reported in his telegram No. 165 of the 28th June that the French Minister at Tehran had addressed to the Quai d'Orsay was a short summary of the differences which had arisen between the British and Russian Legations. M. Pichon read it to me, and promised to let me have a copy of it for your confidential information. It did not differ in substance from the detailed accounts telegraphed by Mr. Marling. On receiving this telegram M. Pichon had, he told me, at once requested the French Ambassador in London to ask Count Benckendorff, on whom he has great influence, to urge the Russian Government to send to their Minister at Tehran such directions as would put an end to the discord between him and the British Chargé d'Affaires. M. Pichon would, in consequence of the representations which I had made by your directions, instruct the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg by telegraph to use his best endeavours to the same end, but inasmuch as Admiral Touchard was new to office, and probably not fully acquainted with the questions at issue, M. Pichon said that he would see the Russian Ambassador to-morrow afternoon, for he thought that he could through him exercise more efficaciously a moderating influence on the Russian Government. He could not have an interview with M. de Nélidoff before the afternoon, for in the forenoon there was an interpellation in the Senate by Baron d'Estournelles de Constant on what that Senator termed the bellicose policy of the French Government.

M. Pichon, in deprecating the proceedings of the Russian Colonel of Cossacks and the attitude of the Russian Minister, stated that a continuation of the differences between Russia and England in Persia would be lamentable and be the joy of Germany. He entirely concurred with you that it would be impossible to give up the refugees without proper guarantees as to their treatment, or for His Majesty's Government to support the Shah against the Persian people. Some means must be sought to reconcile the differences between the British and Russian Governments, and His Majesty's Government might rely on his using his best endeavours to restore harmony between them. He asked me what were the requirements of His Majesty's Government for satisfaction from Persia for the affront to the British Legation. I was unable to tell his Excellency.

In the course of my interview with M. Pichon, he asked me what I knew of M. de Hartwig. I said that he had been in the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Office, and appeared to follow the same policy as he had done when there, and what the Russian Government should do to replace matters on a proper footing at Tehran would be to disavow and recall the Russian Colonel of Cossacks and to give instructions to their Minister to forget his days in the Asiatic Department and to inspire himself with the spirit of the recent Anglo-Russian Agreements.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS BERTIE.

[22882]

No. 22.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.---(Received July 3.)

(No. 262.)

Sir,

Paris, July 1, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 78 of the 30th June, and to my despatch No. 259 of to-day's date, relative to the action of the Russian Cossack Colonel at Tehran, and to the attitude of the Russian Minister at that capital towards His Majesty's Legation, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a telegram on this subject from the French Minister at Tehran to M. Pichon, which the latter, in accordance with his promise, has just communicated to me.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. BERTIE.

[1599]

Inclosure in No. 22.

M. Lecomte to M. Pichon.(Confidential.)
(Télégraphique.)*Téhéran, le 29 Juin, 1908.*

MEs collègues d'Angleterre et de Russie ont eu devoir m'entretenir de la question des réfugiés politiques, le désaccord survenu entre les Légations à ce sujet s'étant récemment convenu.

Le Ministre de Russie estime que son collègue d'Angleterre met obstacle à l'apaisement souhaité, en entretenant un foyer révolutionnaire; il croit savoir que le personnel et les domestiques de la Légation Britannique auraient invité les réfugiés à chercher asile à la Légation, ce qui, d'après lui, serait en contradiction avec les arrangements privés intervenus entre les deux Légations.

En réalité, Mr. Marling, en ouvrant sa porte le soir du bombardement a obéi à un mouvement irrésistible d'humanité; il est soucieux de respecter les arrangements pris avec son collègue de Russie, mais, malgré ses efforts, certains réfugiés ont pu encore s'introduire dans la Légation. Malgré l'insistance du Ministre Russe, il refuse naturellement de les laisser sortir, et il proteste contre l'investissement de sa Légation par les troupes Persanes et contre la surveillance de la police.

De son côté, Mr. Marling estime que M. de Hartwig, contrairement aux promesses échangées mutuellement, n'observe pas la neutralité dans la politique intérieure et qu'il a pris parti contre le Medjliss et pour le Shah.

L'amnistie étant rendue vaine en réalité par l'application de la loi martiale, il est impossible à Mr. Marling, tant au point de vue humain qu'au point de vue Anglais, de livrer les réfugiés, dont deux au moins sont en danger de mort.

Je partage l'opinion de mon collègue d'Angleterre sur les conséquences que peut avoir la restauration du pouvoir du Shah, mais je reconnais également que ceux qu'il protège sont aussi dangereux que compromettants. Je souhaiterais donc que M. de Hartwig appréciait plus objectivement les événements et le rôle des Légations.

Le conflit entre mes deux collègues est très sérieux: sa gravité dépasse les ressources que je puis mettre sur place en œuvre pour rétablir la concorde; dans ces conditions votre Excellence jugera sans doute bon d'entrer en conversation avec Londres et Pétersbourg, afin que des instructions dans le sens de la conciliation soient adressées au Ministre de Russie et que le récent Accord Anglo-Russe sorte indemne de la crise actuelle.

(Signé) RAYMOND LECOMTE.

[22911]

No. 23.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 2nd instant, relative to Consular escorts in Persia.

India Office, July 2, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Télégraphique.) P.

July 2, 1908.

ESCORTS in Persia.

Please refer to your telegram of the 2nd March: Shiraz. Consul has made a recommendation to Tehran Legation about reliefs, and question of retaining increased escort has arisen in this connection. We agree with Major Cox and Mr. Bill, both of whom recommend that there should be no reduction of numbers, and we recommend that, for a further period of six months, the escort should be kept at its present strength.

[22953]

No. 24.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 111.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 3, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 201 of the 1st July: Crisis in Persia.

M. Isvolsky promises his unconditional support to the demands to be presented by His Majesty's Legation to the Persian Government, and is at once giving instructions to that effect to M. de Hartwig. His Excellency much appreciates the regard for Russia, which His Majesty's Government have shown in framing these demands. He gave me, as regards question of Russian intervention, the most positive assurances that Russian Colonel, in carrying out Shah's recent measures and assuming military control of Tehran (if he had done so), acted without either the orders, knowledge, or approval of the Imperial Government.

Colonel Liakhoff might feel bound to carry out the Shah's orders, seeing that he is in His Majesty's employment, but M. Isvolsky refuses to admit that such action would constitute Russian intervention. His Excellency, not being fully informed of the precise facts of the case, is now making inquiries on this head.

M. Isvolsky considers that, in view of the categorical instructions sent to Russian Minister at Tehran to adopt a friendly attitude towards the British Legation, it would, in the interest of good relations, be most desirable that Mr. Marling should now be asked to show a conciliatory spirit in his dealings with M. de Hartwig.

[22969]

No. 25.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 112.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 3, 1908.

PERSIAN situation.

Referring to Mr. Marling's telegram No. 186 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to state that I did understand the passage in his telegram No. 173 of the 30th ultimo which runs, "inforced by Asiatics, &c," to signify that orders were given on the spot by Russian officers, and in one of the two Memoranda which I presented on the 29th June (Inclosure 3 of my despatch No. 300 of the 30th June) I used language to that effect.

In the course of a conversation which I had to-day with M. Isvolsky, his Excellency having raised this point, I said that I retracted the statement made in my Memorandum, as we did not desire to assert that Russian officers were present near the Legation.

[22874]

No. 26.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 186.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 2, 1908.

I AM informed by M. de Hartwig that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has received a Memorandum from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg in which it is said that I stated that Russian officers on the spot expressly ordered the acts of the soldiers recited in my telegram No. 173 of the 30th ultimo. What I intended to express was that the public considered the Russian officers responsible for the general behaviour of the Cossacks towards His Majesty's Legation, as the brigade is under their command. No Russian officer has ever, so far as I am aware, been on duty near the Legation.

I much regret that a false impression should have been produced by my telegram.

[22951]

No. 27.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 187.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

DR. ISMAEL'S family.

I have no reason to apprehend that the persons mentioned in your telegram No. 141 of the 30th ultimo are in special danger.

Tehran, July 3, 1908.

[22968]

No. 28.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 188.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 3, 1908.

DEMANDS of His Majesty's Government, contained in your telegram No. 145 of the 1st instant, have been communicated to Russian and French Ministers. No comment was made by the former.

Mr. Churchill went to the Palace this morning. As it was Friday, he was unable to see the Shah, but he saw Amir Bahadur Jang, and handed the demands to him.

I have made one or two alterations in the wording of the demands. The expression "High Chamberlain" would allow the Court to send an official of very low rank and morals, and I have therefore substituted "Minister of Court"; also after "political offences," in No. 5, I have added the words "for which they are now manifested," in order to avoid ambiguity in the Persian text.

[22732]

No. 29.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 206.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

With reference to your telegram No. 109 of the 1st instant:

The suggestion made by the Russian Government with regard to the undertakings to be obtained from the Zil-ess-Sultan as a condition of our approaching the Shah on his behalf is agreed to by us. Inform Minister for Foreign Affairs.

When his departure has been definitely decided on, the question can be settled as to whether a British ship can be provided to convey him abroad.

[22874]

No. 30.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 208.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

PERSIAN situation. With reference to the telegram No. 186 of the 2nd instant from Tehran.

The misapprehension with regard to the words used by Mr. Marling which is entertained by the Russian Government should be corrected (see his telegram No. 173). The officers in command must, however, necessarily bear the responsibility for the action of the soldiers.

[22953]

No. 31.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

PERSIA. Relations between Russian and British Legations.

Instructions in sense desired are being sent to Mr. Marling.

I request that you will convey my thanks to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs for the friendly manner in which his Excellency has complied with my request.

[22871]

No. 32.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. G. Barclay.

(No. 112.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

FRONTIER dispute between Persia and Turkey.

A statement in the following sense was made to me yesterday by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires:—

It has been proved as the result of a joint inquiry carried out at Urumiah by the Consuls of Russia and Great Britain that the outrages perpetrated at the end of May were committed by the Kurds, the responsibility for whose conduct rests exclusively upon the Turks.

Instructions have been sent to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to bring these facts to the notice of the Ottoman Government, and to lay emphatic stress, in concert with the British Minister, on the necessity for effective measures being adopted in order that such an intolerable state of affairs may be put a stop to.

The representations to be made by your Russian colleague may be supported by you in the fullest degree.

[22732]

No. 33.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 153.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

With reference to my telegram to Mr. O'Beirne No. 206 of to-day's date:

You are authorized to take action accordingly in concert with your Russian colleague.

[22953]

No. 34.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 156.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

RELATIONS between Russian and British Legations.

With reference to the telegram No. 111 of the 3rd instant from St. Petersburg: You must do everything you can to bring about the restoration of good relations between the two Legations, in view of the instructions which have been sent by M. Isvolsky and of the great importance of not allowing the Anglo-Russian Convention to be disturbed by local friction. Investigation of any charges against gholams or other members of your staff of having invited refugees appears to me desirable. Means might thus be found of convincing the Russian Minister that he has been misled, and of refuting some of the charges, of the baselessness of which I gather you are convinced.

[22871]

No. 35.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Poklewski-Kozietl.

SIR E. GREY presents his compliments to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, and, with reference to the communication made on the 2nd instant with regard to the representations to be made by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople in regard to the recent excesses committed by Kurds in Persian territory, has the honour to state that telegraphic instructions have been sent to His Majesty's Minister at Constantinople to give his full support to these representations.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.

[21937]

No. 36.

Foreign Office to Messrs. Hajji Ali Akbar and Co.(Confidential.)
Gentlemen,*Foreign Office, July 3, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, according to reports received from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, a gentleman connected with your Company, Mr. Hajji Ali Asgar, who is a Persian subject, intends to apply on their behalf to the Persian Government for a Concession to work the mines of red oxide which are to be found on the Island of Siri.

I am to request you to be so good as to furnish His Majesty's Government with a written guarantee to the effect that, if this Concession is granted by the Persian Government to your Company, they will control it as a British Company in British interests, and will not transfer it nor allow it to be shared in by any foreigner.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLIET.

[22992]

No. 37.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 4.)

Sir,

India Office, July 2, 1908.

I AM directed to inclose, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Government of India proposing that Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking, an officer with the escort at Ahwaz, should be placed on duty for a period not exceeding five months, on his present emoluments, to assist the Vice-Consul at that place.

Should Sir E. Grey consider it desirable that the Vice-Consul should have the facilities for touring which would be afforded him by the retention of Lieutenant Ranking in Persia after the withdrawal of the reinforcement of the escort approved for six months from December last, the Secretary of State in Council would be prepared to sanction the proposal of the Government of India on the understanding that the cost is equally divided between the Indian and British Exchequers.

He is unable, without reference to the Government of India, to say definitely what is the amount of Lieutenant Ranking's present emoluments, but they would not presumably differ greatly from the sum normally drawn by a Lieutenant in the Indian army in military employment, viz., from 325 rupees to 375 rupees a-month (260*l.* to 300*l.* a-year).

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

June 12, 1908.

ARABISTAN. My telegram dated the 20th December, 1907.

Request has been made by Vice-Consul at Ahwaz that, with a view to enabling him to tour more freely in the Bakhtiari and Kuhgahi country, Lieutenant Ranking, one of the officers in charge of detachment deputed for protection of Oil Syndicate camps, may be attached to him for the present hot weather. Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, and Resident, Persian Gulf, support the proposal, and we propose to sanction the deputation of Lieutenant Ranking on his present emoluments for a period not exceeding five months. We should be glad to know if you approve, and if half of the charge will be borne by His Majesty's Government.

[22995]

No. 38.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, paraphrases of telegrams to the Viceroy, dated the 1st and 2nd July, relative to the situation in Persia.

India Office, July 3, 1908.

Inclosure 1 in No. 38.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 1, 1908.

PLEASE refer to telegrams of the 25th ultimo from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran regarding situation in Persia.

In reply, Mr. Marling was instructed on the 25th ultimo that, unless a guarantee is given of fair trial or safe conduct to the frontier, he was to decline to give up refugees already in the Legation; he was also to demand that the troops posted round the Legation should be withdrawn immediately, failing which steps would at once be taken by His Majesty's Government to exact reparation for the indignity, which is deeply resented by them.

As the best means of exacting reparation it was suggested that a Persian port should be occupied. At the same time instructions were sent to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg to inform M. Isvolsky of the instructions sent to Mr. Marling, and to urge him to support the representations we were making to the Persian Government.

Unless asked what we meant by reparation, Mr. O'Beirne was not to mention occupation of port. Mr. O'Beirne was also instructed to suggest to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs that representations to the Shah should be made jointly, urging him to summon the Assembly and give the persons arrested a fair trial.

With reference to the telegram of the 26th ultimo from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran regarding the Zil-es-Sultan, Mr. O'Beirne was instructed on the 27th ultimo to explain to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs that the best means of avoiding further complications, in our opinion, lay in the Zil's absence from Persia, and to urge the Russian Government to support us in making representations that, on condition of his leaving Persia, the Zil should be allowed to retain his properties.

Inclosure 2 in No. 38.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 2, 1908.

SEE telegrams of the 28th ultimo from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran regarding situation in Persia.

Instructions were sent on the 29th ultimo to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg to make strong protest against manner in which His Majesty's Legation at Tehran has been treated by Russian Colonel of Cossacks, and to say that His Majesty's Government will have to vindicate honour of flag by naval action in Gulf unless Colonel is at once restrained. Sir E. Grey has told the Russian Ambassador that we take a most serious view of the situation.

[23075]

No. 39.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 189.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 4, 1908.

THIS morning early Minister for Foreign Affairs sent me a letter, contents of which obviously insinuated that preparations are being made in His Majesty's

Legation to receive bastis in large numbers. His Highness stated that large quantities of rice had been brought into Legation yesterday evening, and that there had been a large assemblage of persons outside the gates, where great excitement had prevailed.

As regards the supplies, the Vice-Consul, who has temporarily relieved the Military Attaché in the Legation in town, reports that two pots and about ten wooden trays were brought in for the use of the bastis already in the Legation, and that one pot was sent out again. He also states that there was no excitement amongst the crowd, which was no greater than on a Friday in normal times, and that some had no doubt come to see the Legation which has been so much talked about lately.

It was yesterday rumoured that the bazaars would be closed to-day, and it is possible that a double ration of food for the refugees already in the Legation was brought in for this reason.

Cossack guards were again posted last night, but were withdrawn to-day about 10 A.M. The intention to close the bazaars, which are nowhere near the Legation, is given as a pretext for this, but no doubt it was the result of suspicions in regard to the supply of food, &c.

The guards consisted of a patrol of four men, who went all round the Legation, a party of six men with a Persian officer, and another party of five men.

Cossack on duty at the guardhouse opposite the gate gives a report of who has entered or left the Legation to Persian Cossack officer, who comes daily to receive it.

A Soyid came this morning to ask if his son was in the Legation. He was told he was not, and the Vice-Consul saw him seized and taken off by Cossacks as he went down the street.

[23076]

No. 40.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 190.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 4, 1908.

CONSUL-GENERAL at Bagdad reports that a telegram is said to have been sent on the 1st instant to Tehran, Shiraz, Ispahan, and Tabreez by chief Majaf priests at Kasri Shirin.

Telegram declares for the information of all that opposition to the Assembly has emanated entirely from one centre, and now it is the open intention of the Shah to kill Moslems. Those who oppose the Assembly are outside the religion, like Yezid, son of Muavia. The orders of the chief priests are clear—the Assembly is the support of religion, and those who die for it are martyrs.

It does not appear that any effect has been produced in the provinces by this telegram.

[23077]

No. 41

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 191.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 4, 1908.

CHARGES against Legation staff.

Following is very confidential:—

Your telegram No. 156 of the 3rd instant.

Telegrams from St. Petersburg are being much delayed, and I would suggest that they should be repeated from London. I have not yet received Mr. O'Beirne's telegram No. 111.

An attempt to inquire into the charges against the gholams would involve examining a mass of native evidence, and nothing is easier than to suborn witnesses. I would therefore much deprecate this course. Shah's party would, moreover, not hesitate to bribe witnesses, though I do not mean to insinuate that Russian Legation would be capable of it. Still, a joint inquiry would only embitter relations, and I fear Russian Minister would not be much impressed by result of investigations conducted by myself.

The only two charges of a sufficiently definite nature against European members to admit of refutation of the Legation I can disprove:—

1. See my telegram No. 164. That a Deputy was invited to take bast with us by Mr. Churchill. The Deputy is prepared to make a statement that he never received in any form whatever such an invitation.

2. Yesterday Russian Minister accused Major Stokes of asserting that the Proclamation announcing military law was still exposed near the Legation, while, according to Russian Minister, a later Proclamation had been pasted over it. I can prove by independent English evidence that Major Stokes' statement is correct, while the evidence adduced by M. de Hartwig is the report of a Cossack non-commissioned officer to Colonel Liakhoff.

[23078]

No. 42.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 192.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 4, 1908.

I HAVE received following telegram No. 82, dated the 3rd July, from Vice-Consul at Tabreez:—

No looting has taken place to-day. Fighting continues between a few bands of Nationalists and horsemen of Government party. Bread is scarce, but town is fairly quiet.

[22992]

No. 43.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 157.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 4, 1908.

A PROPOSAL has been made by the Government of India that, in order to enable Vice-Consul at Ahwaz to make tours, Lieutenant Ranking should be attached to the Vice-Consulate there for five months. Do you consider this necessary? I have grave doubts on the subject. Please telegraph your views.

I should have to have adequate grounds before I could apply to the Treasury.

23082]

No. 44.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 156.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 5, 1908.

FOLLOWING from Consul-General Wratislaw, Urumia, received here the 5th instant, via Tabreez, No. 42, dated the 1st instant:—

"Tranquillity in the district round Urumia is now entirely restored, and telegraphic communication is resumed, and has been in working order for some days, though the Persian office is apparently shut.

"Taher Pasha has received a Memorandum from the Persian Commissioner on the Turco-Persian frontier, in which he claims all districts east of the *status quo* frontier, basing this claim principally on long possession and Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzeroun. He demands damages for the aggression of Turkish troops, and that the troops should be withdrawn."

[23079]

No. 45.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 193.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 5, 1908.

RETENTION of Consulate escort at Shiraz. My despatch No. 153 of the 17th ultimo.

In view of dismissal of Zil-es-Sultan and certainty of renewal of disorders in the

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province under the new Governor, Acting Consul wishes to know whether you sanction detention of detachment, and asks whether he may purchase six horses for their use.

Governor-Designate on a former occasion showed himself to be entirely incompetent, and I think it would be prudent to sanction retention, as I am convinced that, on departure of Zil, disorders will break out anew.

[23081]

No. 46.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 195.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 5, 1908.

COSSACK guards round His Majesty's Legation. My telegram No. 189 of yesterday.

Cossacks continued to patrol the roads round the Legation yesterday. Between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. they made five rounds, and between 9.30 p.m. and 1 a.m. three; between 6.30 a.m. and 11 a.m. this morning, three. Surveillance is less offensive than it was, and they made no long halts.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is to call on me to-day. I have intimated to his Highness that he must submit to me the text of the apology to be tendered.

In regard to releases under demand No. 3, I shall use the greatest discretion owing to difficulty of identification.

It is probable that the Shah will ask that he may send out of the country three or four of the refugees.

[22879]

No. 47.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 82.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 5, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 29 of the 1st July, and to your despatch No. 259 of the 1st July.

Please inform French Minister for Foreign Affairs that the attitude of French Minister at Tehran is warmly appreciated by His Majesty's Government, and convey to his Excellency our most cordial thanks for the friendly and valuable support he has given us in this matter, whereby our request for assistance was even forestalled.

Our demands on the Persian Government (see my telegram No. 145, Telegraphic, of the 1st July, to Tehran) may be communicated to his Excellency in reply to his inquiry.

[23114]

No. 48.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 139.)

Sir,

Gulakeh, June 5, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report that in January last one Sheikh Mohammed Hassan, who was acting temporarily as Zabit of Kais Island, which is under the port of Charak, in the jurisdiction of the Government of Fars, caused shots to be fired on a boat containing the Assistant of the British Residency Agent at Lingah, who, with the representative of the Sheikh of Charak, was proceeding to the island to investigate the grievances of British subjects residing there. The boat was flying the British flag.

His Majesty's Consul-General arranged with the Governor of the Persian ports that they should both proceed personally to the island to take measures necessary for the punishment of the offenders, but owing to the difficulties caused by the Customs Department in connection with the departure of the vessel in which they proposed to leave, some delay ensued and, in the meantime, the Zabit had escaped to the mainland.

Upon my representing to the Persian Government the serious nature of the Zabit's offence, instructions were sent to Darya Begi, the Governor of the Gulf ports, to find the offender, though he was actually outside his administration, and to punish him to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Consul-General.

Major Cox has now reported that the Governor has arrested the Sheikh, and that the following settlement has been arrived at. The Sheikh has been sentenced to three

months' imprisonment from the 26th May last and fined 400 rupees, or in default three months' more imprisonment; further, 100 rupees, which had been extorted from British Indians, to be refunded.

I have demanded, and will renew my request for, an official apology for the violation of the flag from the Persian Government, but, in view of the unsettled state of affairs here and the total disorganization of the Government Departments, I have little hope of being able to obtain it at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23117]

No. 49.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 142. Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulakeh, June 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, reporting the payment by the Bakhtiari Khans, through the Sheikh of Mohammerah, of 96,000 krams on account of the construction of the Ahwaz-Isfahan road.

The success of Captain Lorimer's persistent efforts to obtain payments from the Khans on this account is most satisfactory, and, I venture to think, reflects great credit on that officer. I am approving his suggestion to endeavour to secure the payment of the 1904 bridge repairs bill out of this sum, as also the proposed procedure in regard to compensation for the Qalah Madrassah robbery and the payment of the oil instalment due on the 15th May last.

It is a curious coincidence, and there is nothing to show that it is anything more than a coincidence, that this large payment by the Bakhtiari Khans was synchronous with the presence in their country of Herr Mygind, the correspondent of the "Berliner Tagelblatt," on his way from Tehran to Mohammerah. This gentleman, to judge from a telegram sent by him, of which His Majesty's Acting Consul at Shiraz obtained a copy, appears to have been hospitably entertained by the Khans, who are ordinarily suspicious of European travellers unless they are armed with recommendations from persons well known to them. I am endeavouring to ascertain through what agency Herr Mygind got into touch with the Khans, and, should the matter prove to be of any interest, will not fail to inform you of the result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Vice-Consul Lorimer to Mr. Marling.

(No. 201.)

Sir,

Ahwaz, April 29, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Bakhtiari Khans have just paid in to Messrs. Lynch Brothers here, through the Sheikh of Mohammerah, the sum of 96,000 krams on the account for the "construction of the road."

2. They stayed here one night lately on the way back to their country. They called on me, and on that occasion expressed their desire to pay the next oil instalment to Messrs. Lynch Brothers and the remaining balance due on the construction account immediately in cash. They did speak casually, as on previous occasions, of paying off all or part of the outstanding account for construction, and after they had left Haji Reis advised Lynch of his arranging to pay on the sum mentioned above on behalf of the Khans. Payment is now in progress.

A telegram has also been received from the Khans confirming the payment of 96,000 krams on the account of the "construction of the road and bridges."

3. I do not understand that the Khans have yet consented to pay up the bridge repair bill of 1904, but as opportunity occurs I shall endeavour to induce them to allow the recovery of this claim from the surplus of the present deposit.

The only other claim now outstanding is that for some piece goods robbed from a caravan at Qala Madrassah last August, but this, I have reason to hope, they will

shortly pay in cash. If they do not, I shall try and also work it out of them through the present deposit.

Until these matters are finally settled one way or another, it will not be possible to make the necessary adjustment of the construction account. I am arranging for the payment of the oil instalment of the 15th May, as under present circumstances I consider that any show of harshness would be very inexpedient.

I, however, bluntly told the Khans that unless they made good their promises as regards the Oil Guards, and until I was convinced that their present statements were borne out by facts, they might take it for granted that the instalment would not be paid.

This is how the matter stands as far as their knowledge goes, and I think that for the time being they will do what they can towards making the guard satisfactory.

I have, &c.

(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, Captain, I.A.

[23118]

No. 50.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey. -- (Received July 6.)

(No. 143.)

Sir,

Tehran, June 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the number of Russian troops employed as Consular guards in Persia, which has been drawn up by the Military Attaché.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Major Stokes to Mr. Marling.

(No. 28.)

Sir,

Tehran, June 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your information, a statement of the number of Russian troops employed as Consular guards in Persia.

The total now stands approximately at 4 officers and 313 men, an increase in the last thirteen months of 4 officers and 140 men.

Place.	Cossacks.		Infantry.	Total.		Total Increase.
	Officers.	Men.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	
Mashed	..	24	4	..	28	..
Terbat-i-Haidari	..	25	4	..	29	23
Karoz	..	15	4	..	19	10
Seistan	..	30	..	..	30	..
Kerman	..	8	..	..	8	2
Bunder Abbas	..	10	..	1	10	(Decrease 1)
Beshire	..	6	..	..	6	..
Isfahan	..	25	..	..	25	10
Tehran	..	11	..	..	14	..
Tabreez	..	50	..	1	50	27
Urmia	..	14	..	..	14	1
Kermanshah	..	13	..	..	13	..
Beshi	..	10	..	..	10	10
Astarchad	..	10	..	..	10	10
Ardebil	..	50	..	2	50	52
Total	4	304	9	4	313	144

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major,
Military Attaché.

[23119]

No. 51.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey. -- (Received July 6.)

(No. 144.)

Sir,

Gulahck, June 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw on the subject of the position of affairs on the Turco-Persian frontier.

From Mr. Wratislaw's telegram No. 35 of the 11th instant, which did not reach me till the 14th, it appears to be certain that the inactivity to which Muhtesham-es-Sultaneh is condemned by the threatening attitude of the Ottoman frontier authorities is encouraging the Kurdish tribes to further attacks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 51.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 8.)

Sir,

Urmî, May 17, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the translation of a letter which Colonel Yaver Bey, the Turkish Officer Commanding on the frontier, has addressed to Muhtesham-es-Sultaneh with regard to the presence of a handful of Turkish soldiers in some villages to the east of Baradost, which are not occupied by the Turks.

Yaver Bey declares that these villages, the centre of which is Hissar-i-Sinjeh, and which are miles outside the neutral zone, are Turkish territory, and he warns the Persians off them pending the decision of the Mixed Commission on the whole frontier question. A somewhat similar letter has been written by Shakir Bey, the Kaïmakam of Ushnu, to the Persian owner of the villages round Sheitanabad, to the south of Urmî, which, as reported in my telegram No. 20 of the 2nd May, have been driven to give in their submission to Turkey.

This arrogant attitude on the part of the Turkish frontier authorities puts Muhtesham-es-Sultaneh in a very unenviable position. The Turks do nothing to maintain order in the districts they claim but have not occupied, and they forbid the Persians to do so. The inhabitants naturally claim protection against Kurdish attacks from the Governor of Urmî, and he is afraid to accord it lest his action should lead to a collision with the Turks.

Between Urmî and Salmas there has been considerably less insecurity of late. This is due to the fact that the Shekoik Kurds of Sonai and Chahrik have been occupied with their own affairs. Their Chief, Ismail Agha, is threatened with an attack from Simko (Ismail), the Chief of Kotur, and younger brother of the late Jaffer Agha, who was executed at Tabreez three years ago, and who previously held sway in Chahrik. Simko is supported by Ikbâl-es-Sultaneh, Chief of Maku, to whom the Persian Government has in despair intrusted the maintenance of order from Maku to the borders of the Urmî district. It is improbable that Ismail will be able to withstand their combined attack, but it may result in his throwing himself into the arms of the Turks.

Ikbâl-es-Sultaneh has also sent 200 horsemen to Urmî. Muhtesham-es-Sultaneh apparently proposes to keep them here to maintain his own position in the town, which is not very secure. Others have been stationed at Dilman (Salmas). They are merely savages.

Kurdish attacks on villages round Urmî continue to be fairly frequent. The Barandoz district is particularly exposed to them, and many of the villages there talk seriously of offering their submission to the Turks—a course which has elsewhere resulted in an immediate cessation of outrages. One Kurd is so much like another, particularly at night when the attacks take place, that it is hard to identify the assailants, but Kerim Khan, a Mergavar Chief, was undoubtedly the principal culprit in the raid on the villages of Doal, round Sheitanabad, and for him the Turks are directly responsible. On the other hand, two Begzadeh Chiefs, Mehmet Beg and Tamar Beg, have taken up their quarters outside the Turkish lines, and encouraged by the complaisance with which Muhtesham-es-Sultaneh has treated them as possible seeders from the Turkish side, indulge their predatory instincts to the full.

Nothing has lately been heard of Taher Pasha, who, if he had really left Arzish for

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Urmi on the 27th April, as the Grand Vizier assured Mr. Barclay, could easily have been here ten days or a fortnight ago.

On the whole, the situation is as bad as it well can be. Judging by local indications, the Turkish Government, in spite of the pacific assurances of the Porte, have no idea of coming to anything in the shape of an equitable settlement of the frontier question, and I do not think that any satisfactory result can be expected from a renewal of local negotiations, if ever it takes place.

The Russian Vice-Consul, who is about to proceed to Russia on leave of absence, informs me that he has received instructions to first travel the whole length of the frontier in this region, in company with Colonel Tumanski, and report on the situation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 51.

Colonel Yaver Bey to Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh.

(Translation.)
Excellency,

[Undated.]

I REGRET that you should have taken as threatening the letter which, in order to put a stop to encroachments, I wrote to one Nejati (the leader and inciter of horsemen sent to some villages of the district of Baradost, which forms part of the Imperial Dominions) so that no anxiety might arise between the two Governments by reason of their inciting the local population against the Turkish Government.

Your Excellency is naturally aware that soldiers are under the obligation of performing their duty. How can a soldier keep silent when another Government sets the foot of encroachment on territory belonging to his own Government?

It is self-evident that no good can result from the entry of Persian soldiers, under the pretext of guarding roads and communications, into these villages which belong to Turkey, and that the responsibility will fall on the officials of Persia. If there is any dispute between the two Governments regarding the above-mentioned territory, to settle it is the duty of the Commission formed for the purpose. Pending the decision of the Commission, my duty obliges me to prevent Persian encroachments on our frontier as it has been indicated to me.

Accept, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED-BIN-AHMET YAVAR.

[23120]

No. 52.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 145.)
Sir,

Gulabek, June 15, 1908.

I LEARN from an entry in the Turbat-i-Haidari diary of the 25th ultimo that Captain Iyass informed His Majesty's Consul that Lieutenant-Colonel Baron von der Flaas had been appointed Military Attaché in Seistan. Captain Keyes adds that this gentleman was "Officer for Special Commissions" on the staff of the General commanding in Turkestan, and was told off to look after Captain Watson and himself when they visited Turkestan in 1904.

This appointment is technically in accordance with the assurances given to me by the Russian Minister, and reported in my telegram No. 48 of the 19th February last, that there would be no increase in the Russian Consular staff in Seistan, but on examination of the actual changes shows that a Consul is being sent to replace M. Bravine; a doctor to replace Dr. Zaplotinsky, who has left; and Lieutenant-Colonel von der Flaas to replace M. Dantal, a dragonian, who died. The substitution of a Military Attaché, and especially an officer of the rank and seniority of Baron von der Flaas, is, I venture to think, hardly consonant with the spirit of the recent Anglo-Russian Convention, nor indeed can it be regarded as of good augury for the hoped-for relaxation of Russian activity in Seistan.

I have not mentioned the matter to the Russian Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23121]

No. 53.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 146.)
Sir,

Gulabek, June 17, 1908.

IT is not easy to explain all the causes, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, to assign their relative importance to the various causes of the crisis which has agitated Persia, and especially the capital, for some days at the end of May and beginning of June.

Since the 16th ultimo the country had been without a Cabinet, and the efforts to form one had been much hampered by the excitement and indignation aroused by the Russian ultimatum over the Beliassevar affair. This episode, indeed, was never placed in its proper light before the Medjliss or public, who have always been permitted by the Ministers to regard it as an isolated event, and not as the last, if most serious, of a series of frontier incidents in which Persia had been constantly in the wrong. This reluctance to tell unpleasant truths is shared by all Persian Ministers, who dare not say anything but what is palatable to the public. It was this same lack of moral courage which forbade them from denying the rumour, which gained credence everywhere, that the Shah himself had authorized the entry of the Russian troops to enforce the terms of the Russian ultimatum. There are various versions current of this rumour, but the most generally accepted is that Mukhber-es-Sultaneh, Governor-General of Azerbaijan, had reported that when at Tiflis he had been told by Prince Worontsoff Dashkoff that the Shah and his Prime Minister had agreed to allow General Snarsky to operate in Persian territory if the Russian terms were not complied with in the allotted period. Mushir-ed-Dowleh confessed to me that he had never seen this report, but he could not find the courage to make a public statement to the same effect, for he well realized that, with the insane suspicions and mistrust which are generally entertained against the Shah, merely to contradict the wild lies told to the discredit of His Majesty would cost a Minister his place. His cowardice, however, did not on this occasion save him, for his lack of straightforwardness and his timorous management of the question involved him in such an *impasse* that on the 30th ultimo he took the usual course of Persian Ministers in face of a serious difficulty and tendered his resignation. His disappearance from the Foreign Office will be regretted by no one. Meantime his wretched weakness resulted in a fresh outburst of popular wrath against the Shah, who was accused not merely of agreeing to the entry of the Russian troops, but even of having contrived the Beliassevar incident. The bitterness of the people was diverted from the Russians and turned upon the Shah, and a formidable agitation was started, demanding that His Majesty should dismiss from his service Amir Behadur Jang, M. Chapehal, and others of his most trusted courtiers, who for that very reason are particularly obnoxious to the Popular party. The cry is not a new one; it originated the December crisis, and has often been heard subsequently, and it is quite possible on the present occasion the demand would have been pressed home had it not been that the agitation was being actively fomented by Zil-es-Sultan's friends in Tehran. Their plan of action was designed with considerable cunning.

On the 28th ultimo the Zil-es-Sultan's eldest son, Jelal-ed-Dowleh, came to the Legation by appointment and told me that he and all the Kajars were absolutely in fear of their lives at the hands of the Anjumens. The latter were absolutely determined to be rid once for all of Amir Behadur Jang and the other objectionable courtiers, to whose evil counsels the Shah's hostility to the best interests of the country was due, but it was difficult to bring pressure to bear on the Shah except by a show of force, and that they dared not employ for fear of Russian intervention. The Anjumens therefore had belthought them of intimidating the Kajar Princes and other nobles into forcing the Shah to yield. He, Jelal-ed-Dowleh, had no mind to be used as a cat's-paw in this way, but he had received threatening letters from the Anjumens, and he had been obliged to attend meetings at the house of Azad-ul-Mulk, the head of the Kajar tribe, at which open threats against the Umera (nobles and great dignitaries) had been freely used. He had come to ask my advice, and also to know whether he could count on the protection and support of the Legation. I replied that I had heard nothing yet of any general feeling against the Kajars as a whole, and I believed that he was exaggerating the danger of his situation. The best advice I could give him was simply not to attend the meetings at Azad-ul-Mulk's house, and let it be known generally that he would take no part in politics whatever. As for the protection of the Legation, his Highness knew quite well that His Majesty's Govern-

ment desired that I should abstain wholly from interference in the internal affairs of the country, and he must understand that if he wished to take part in political questions it would make it impossible for me to assist him. Jelal said he would follow this advice, and as he was leaving, said he expected some startling news in the course of the night, which he would impart to me if I would send Mr. Churchill to see him in the morning.

The next day, however, he had little more to say to Mr. Churchill than he had told me, except that he spoke very bitterly about the Shah, who, he said, was bringing the country to ruin; but while Mr. Churchill was with him he received by telephone two imperative messages to attend at Azad-ul-Mulk's house the same afternoon, which he declared he dared not disregard. The objects of Jelal-ed-Dowleh's communications were fairly obvious, viz., to persuade me that he was acting under compulsion and in the interests of the country; and, secondly, to create the impression that he was countenanced by the Legation. Hormuz Mirza, Jelal-ed-Dowleh's brother, came twice within the next three days to tell me of the proceedings at these meetings, which continued to sit almost uninterruptedly for the next three days. According to his statement, all the Umera, and among them, of course, Ala-ed-Dowleh, Muin-ed-Dowleh, and Jelal-ed-Dowleh, were present, and were terrorized by a small number of armed men, members of the Anjumens, who flourished their revolvers and threatened them with death unless they induced the Shah to dismiss the obnoxious courtiers.

Late on Tuesday afternoon (the 2nd instant), the Shah yielded to the popular demands, and agreed to dismiss six of his *entourage*, namely, Amir Behadur Jang, the chief of the body-guard, M. Chapehal, Mofakher-ul-Mulk, Movaggar-es-Sultaneh, Ali Bey, and Anoin-ul-Mulk. Between 2 and 3 the next morning, Amir Behadur Jang, accompanied by some twenty of his armed gholams, arrived at the Russian Legation at Zergendeh.

The following morning, the 3rd instant, I received a visit from the Russian Minister. M. de Hartwig said he was exceedingly anxious about the Shah's safety, while His Majesty looked on himself as practically a doomed man; he thought the position so serious that the two Legations ought to take some step. He was particularly anxious that we should act at once, and as he had received a letter from the Dutch Minister the day before calling his attention to the increasing lawlessness prevailing in Tehran, and suggesting that, as doyen of the Corps Diplomatique, he, M. de Hartwig, should call a meeting of the "Chefs de Mission" to consider what steps should be taken in the circumstances. This letter, he had reason to believe, had been inspired by the German Minister, who seemed not to have abandoned the idea of internationalizing Persian affairs. He suggested, therefore, that we should call together on Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who, though he had resigned office five days before, was still acting as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and point out to him the grave consequences which might ensue to Persia should anything happen to the Shah. I said I was quite willing to join him, but I did not think much would be gained by speaking to Mushir-ed-Dowleh alone, for he would probably give a very imperfect account of our representations, and I suggested that we might ask his Excellency to invite the President of the Assembly to meet us. M. de Hartwig agreed, and proposed that as Montaz-ed-Dowleh was not much more dependable than the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the presence of Azad-ul-Mulk would be desirable.

We accordingly telegraphed to Mushir-ed-Dowleh, inviting him to arrange a meeting for 3.30 that afternoon.

On reaching Mushir-ed-Dowleh's house I found M. de Hartwig already there, but Montaz-ed-Dowleh and Azad-ul-Mulk had both excused themselves on rather flimsy pretexts. M. de Hartwig opened the conversation by pointing out to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the demands of the "revolutionary" party for the dismissal of Amir Behadur Jang, and the other members of the Shah's *entourage*, were unjustifiable, and even outrageous, and that the alleged reasons for the demands, that they were evil counsellors to His Majesty, were ridiculous. Amir Behadur was, as every one knew, a man of no capacity whatever, and his duties at Court were those of a faithful watch-dog who slept at his master's door. M. Chapehal, he said, took no interest whatever in political questions, and the stories of his influence with the Shah and his inciting His Majesty against the Assembly, and so forth, were pure inventions. He was merely the old tutor, for whom the Shah had conceived great personal regard, and whom he had induced to remain attached to his household. If he, M. de Hartwig, had any reason to suspect that M. Chapehal was abusing his position by meddling with politics he would have immediately had him recalled to Russia. So long as he was Russian Minister in

Tehran he desired no unofficial agent at the Palace to do his work for him. The present agitation has not been the work of the Umera or of the Parliament, and was therefore in no sense the expression of a national wish; it was got up by irresponsible political Societies who were trying to bring about a revolution. The Shah's position was now very precarious; he was left practically defenceless, and he felt that his life was at the mercy of these revolutionaries. We had come, said M. de Hartwig, as the Representatives of the two Powers which are most concerned in Persia's well-being, and which by their regular recognition of the successive Valiahs, were peculiarly concerned in the maintenance of the existing dynasty, to point out the dangerous way in which Persia was being allowed to drift towards anarchy; she was already perilously near the condition which in Morocco had brought about an international Conference and international control, and should anything happen to the Shah—an event which would plunge the country into hopeless disorder and turmoil—there was one Legation here which showed every desire to internationalize Persian affairs. This was a very grave prospect, and he hoped that Mushir-ed-Dowleh would make it his business to warn his colleagues and the Assembly in the most serious way of their position.

Following M. de Hartwig, I said that I was quite in agreement with his view of Persia's present situation. I thought that the real remedy lay in trying to create a better feeling between the Shah and his people, and in trying to remove the distrust which was generally entertained of His Majesty. Unfortunately, no one seemed to have the courage to lift up a voice in defence of him. The Medjliss was not a very enlightened body, and its ideas, on financial questions, for instance, were quite childish; yet no one attempted to correct them, and it was just the same where the Anjumens and Shah were concerned. The most palpably improbable stories were circulated to the Shah's discredit, and were eagerly swallowed down by an ignorant and prejudiced mob, simply because no one in authority took the trouble to contradict them.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who seemed very uncomfortable throughout the interview, promised to represent faithfully what we had said to his colleagues and to the Assembly.

M. de Hartwig then urged on him the necessity of taking firm measures against the agitators, whom he described as being a mere handful of revolutionaries, who would be terrified into submission at the first show of force. "Why," he exclaimed, "Amir Behadur's men would rid you of them in an instant." The allusion to Behadur Jang was, in the circumstances, scarcely tactful, and, indeed, all through the interview the Russian Minister's tone had in it a note of menace which I think could well have been spared.

On taking leave, M. de Hartwig said he thought Mushir-ed-Dowleh would probably not give a very accurate account of what we had wished to convey, and it would be prudent that we should call on Azad-ul-Mulk to make a similar statement to him. Having an appointment with Mr. Rabino, I was unable to proceed at once to Azad-ul-Mulk's house, but I followed M. de Hartwig there as soon as possible, and we spoke to him very much in the same strain as to Mushir-ed-Dowleh, except that M. de Hartwig, by pointing out that if anything happened to the Shah the responsibility would be at the door of the persons who had taken part in the recent conclave in Azad-ul-Mulk's house, contrived to accentuate the note of menace which he had used towards Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Azad-ul-Mulk was obviously much embarrassed at our visit, and his uneasiness was increased by the knowledge that Ala-ed-Dowleh and Jelal-ed-Dowleh were within ear-shot. So long as M. de Hartwig was present he spoke very slowly and in loud tones, obviously intending that everything he said should be overheard, and his language, to the effect that the whole nation was really loyal to the Shah, was of the most non-committal description. As soon as M. de Hartwig had left, Azad-ul-Mulk's manner completely changed; he was perfectly at his ease and exceedingly cordial, lowering his voice to a confidential tone, as though assured he could speak freely to me without fear of being called to account for his words by the Popular party. The alteration of his demeanour was most significant of the difference of Persian feeling towards the two Legations.

I have reason to believe that Mushir-ed-Dowleh did inform the President of the Assembly accurately of the purport of our visit, and I took steps to let it be known to an honest and fearless Deputy, who would give a correct account of our language. I cannot say, however, that I am able to share M. de Hartwig's belief that it produced any beneficial result in the direction of bringing about concord between the two parties. On the contrary, I fear that it is more likely that the general belief that Russia stands

behind the Shah has been confirmed, an effect which can only increase His Majesty's unpopularity.

The following morning (4th instant), on reaching Gulahek after an early visit to Tehran on private affairs, I received about 11 o'clock a telephone message from the Medjliss stating that the Shah had left the "Ark" about 10 o'clock for an unknown destination, and inquiring whether His Majesty was at the Russian Legation. The wildest stories were, of course, at once circulated to account for the Shah's disappearance, and the fact that the telegraph wires towards Kazvin had been cut near Tehran seemed to give colour to the notion that he was on the road to Resht, *en route* for Russia. It is, moreover, a fact that the employés of the Indo-European Telegraph Company were forcibly prevented from restoring the line. It appears that about 9:50 A.M. a quarrel between some of the Palace guards was got up at the gate near the Customs Office, and the cry was at once raised that the town was to be looted. Parties of Cossacks and soldiers were sent galloping through the town in every direction, and in the confusion which followed the Shah, surrounded by a strong guard of Cossacks, and with Colonel Liakhoff and M. Chapchal by the side of the carriage, drove off to Bagh Shah on the west side of the city. Order was restored as soon as it was known where His Majesty had gone, but great uneasiness was felt.

As soon as the news reached me I went to the Russian Legation at Zergendeh, and, finding that M. de Hartwig had gone to the German Legation, I awaited his return. On his arrival he said he had received the news by telephone a little after 10 o'clock, and also volunteered the observation that M. Chapchal had been at the Palace about an hour earlier. He was extremely pleased at the turn matters had taken, as he thought the Shah was far safer at Bagh Shah than hemmed in in the centre of the city, and he hoped His Majesty would soon move up to Niaveran at the foot of the mountains.

Tehran remained perfectly quiet; Cossacks patrolled the streets, and the bazaars, which had been closed when the Shah's disappearance became known, reopened by midday. Great uneasiness prevailed, however, as to what His Majesty's next move might be, while the uncertainty of the issue of the frontier question added to the difficulties and apprehensions of the provisional Government. During the next two days *pourparlers* between the Court, the Ministers, the Princes, and Notables followed in rapid succession, and on Saturday afternoon (6th instant) the Minister for Foreign Affairs called at the Russian Minister's, where, after a long interview about the frontier question, he had a conversation with Amir Behadur Jang, with the result that the latter left the Legation the following morning.

M. de Hartwig informed me that Mushir-ed-Dowleh had given him satisfactory assurances as to Amir Behadur Jang's personal safety, and there was therefore no reason why he should stay any longer under the Russian flag. Amir Behadur Jang returned at once to the Palace. It would have been more correct had the Russian Minister declined to allow Amir Behadur Jang to leave the Legation except on an undertaking that he would abstain from taking further part in the crisis.

On the afternoon of the 7th June the Cabinet was finally constituted, and the new Ministers attended the Assembly, but as the ceremony of their introduction took place with closed doors, the fact that a Ministry had been formed was not at once generally known.

Late in the evening Hormuz Mirza arrived at Gulahek and informed me that his brother Jelal-ed-Dowleh, Ala-ed-Dowleh, Serdar Mansur, and Azad-ul-Mulk had been arrested by the Shah, and half-an-hour later another visitor came to tell me the same news, adding also that the three former prisoners had been put in chains and were being treated with every indignity. Both my visitors inquired whether I would take any steps to obtain Jelal-ed-Dowleh's release, such as I had taken in favour of Nasr-ul-Mulk.

I said the cases were quite different, and there was no possible ground on which I could interfere on Jelal-ed-Dowleh's behalf, and all the more so as it was notorious that he had taken a leading part in the recent agitation. In any case, there was no reason to believe that his life was in danger, and, as a matter of fact, Hormuz Mirza at first treated his brother's arrest as a joke. Both these gentlemen hinted at the possibility of the Legation in town being invaded by refugees, and inquired what my attitude would be. I sent two trustworthy gholams to town early the following morning to shut the gates of the Legation and remain on duty there, and warn me by telephone in case any attempt to resort to "bast" was made.

Subsequently it transpired that the Shah had sent a summons to Ala-ed-Dowleh, Jelal-ed-Dowleh, Serdar Mansur, and some others to come to the Palace. At first there

had been a disposition to decline to obey, but on Azad-ul-Mulk's stating that he would guarantee their safety, in consequence of a reassuring letter addressed to him by the Shah, they at last complied. They were escorted by Cossacks to Bagh Shah, where the three whom the Shah believed to have been the leaders of the agitation for the dismissal of the courtiers were placed under arrest. Azad-ul-Mulk pleaded in vain for them, and declared that he would share the fate of the prisoners. He therefore remained at the Palace.

The story that the prisoners were ill-treated either at Bagh Shah or later on their journey to Mazanderan appears to be quite untrue.

There can be no question but that the Shah's suspicions of Ala-ed-Dowleh and Jelal-ed-Dowleh were perfectly justified, but the arrest of Serdar Mansur came as a general surprise. He has been for the past year the Chief Administrator of Telegraphs, and was supposed to take no part in politics. M. de Hartwig informed me that he could form no guess why he was included with the other two, and added that he had always been a good friend to Russia. I told the Minister that as Serdar Mansur held an English decoration I should feel bound to make an inquiry as to the reason of his disgrace, but I did not propose for the present to press my inquiry in such a way as to amount to intervention on his behalf. From what I have been able to extract from Ala-es-Sultaneh, it would seem that he had taken a considerable part in the conclaves at Azad-ul-Mulk's house, that the fact that he had been one of the first to arrive had convinced the Shah that he was the prime mover in the plot. In Persian eyes membership of an order would, of course, amply justify me in pressing for an inquiry into his guilt, but as this would have been interpreted as a step taken to obtain his release, I have thought it better to abstain from taking action which would wear the appearance of intervention in an internal matter. I propose, however, to let Ala-es-Sultaneh understand that I shall expect to be satisfied as to the Serdar's guilt.

Another period of negotiation followed, during which rumours of a most conflicting kind were current. The Anjumens appeared to be in doubt as to the wisdom of continuing the struggle, and the Medjliss and the Ministers were obviously anxious to avoid bringing matters to a climax. On Wednesday morning (the 10th instant), however, the Anjumens, encouraged by an apparently well-founded report that the Cossack Brigade had informed Colonel Liakhoff that though they would defend the Shah they would not attack the Popular party, began to rally to their old meeting-place at the Sepahsalar Mosque, and, with a strong Cossack picket camped day and night in the Cannon Square, it seemed for a time as though the scenes of December were to be repeated. But the town remained quiet, though the bazaars were once or twice closed temporarily, and the attempts which the Cossack patrols had made to disarm persons carrying rifles had been discontinued. At Bagh Shah, which is guarded by a continuous line of sentries, and where there is a strong body of Cossacks supported by a couple of field-guns, the Shah seemed equally irresolute. It was said that he was demanding the arrest and trial of the most prominent Popular leaders, such as Taki Zadeh, Malek-ul-Mulakkelemin, Mufashar-ed-Dowleh, and Seyed Jemal; while, on the other hand, the Anjumens contemplated requiring that the Ala-ed-Dowleh and his two companions, who had been sent away under a strong escort to Mazanderan, should be brought back to Tehran and put on their trial.

By midday on Friday (the 12th instant), however, the Shah screwed up his courage to take a strong step, and a "Dastkhat" (Rescript) was sent by the hand of a Russian officer accompanied by thirty Cossacks to the Assembly and Ministers that, unless the gathering at the mosque dispersed, he would compel them to do so by force. The threat, though it would never have been carried out, was sufficient. After a short debate with the doors of the House closed, a small party of the Members, headed by the President, repaired to the mosque, where they requested the people to go to their homes. The President's speech was followed by one from Taki Zadeh, in which the great leader besought the people to comply, and not to ask the reasons why he thought compliance necessary. The appeal was obeyed in silence, and the Anjumens proceeded to leave the mosque, carrying away with them the great placard which had been hung up setting forth twelve individual instances in which the Shah had violated his oath to observe the Constitution. Ala-es-Sultaneh, who came to see me in the afternoon, seemed much delighted with the results achieved, and thought that for the time being a settlement had been patched up. There was deep dejection on the popular side, who felt that the Medjliss had betrayed the cause. The advice of the Medjliss was, however, probably sound, for the Shah could well aver that the assemblage of a large number of armed men was a danger to the public security, if not to his own person, and that he would be justified in dispersing it by force, while by peaceably

returning to their homes the people have left him without any pretext for doing so. But it was soon realized that the Shah's apparent victory was a hollow one, and by Sunday morning (the 14th instant) the bazaars and shops were again closed, in token that the battle was not over, and the leaders of the popular movement were considering how to carry on the struggle by peaceable and constitutional means. The Shah appeared to have hardened his heart and to be ready to take extreme measures. He obtained a large sum of money (10,000*l.*) from the Mukhber-ed-Dowleh, and with it attempted to secure the fidelity of the Cossack Brigade by giving the men and officers large extra pay—4 *krans* to the privates and 5 to 10 *tomans* to the officers per diem. He began also to recruit a further force among the lower classes of the city, and Bagh Shah was converted into a regular armed camp. But no further arrests were made until Monday (the 15th instant), when the President of the Anjumen of the Brothers of the Kazvin Gate—Sulaiman Khan—and another leading member were captured; the former, who is an official in the War Department, is charged with having allowed rifles and arms to be removed from the arsenal and, it is said, was to be handed over to the Government for trial.

Meantime, the leaders of the Popular party had decided on their course of action, and requested the Shah to receive a deputation of six members of the Medjliss, who were to present a Memorial to His Majesty recalling the various oaths he had taken to observe the Constitution and calling on His Majesty to work harmoniously with the Assembly, for otherwise the representatives of the nation could no longer perform their duties to the country. The Shah, however, declined to receive the deputation till Tuesday (16th June) in the afternoon, when, having himself read the Memorial aloud, he replied that he could not give a definite answer at the moment, but he reminded his auditors that the Kajars had taken Persia by the sword and he meant to hold it by the sword.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw on the afternoon of the 16th June, and who spoke with a frankness very unusual for him, said that he regarded the situation as exceedingly grave. Telegrams were coming in from all parts of the country denouncing the Shah, and yet nothing that the Ministers could say would persuade His Majesty of the danger of pursuing his present course. "Of course," he said, "you recognize who is at the bottom of all this, and if it were not for that external support, we could probably easily calm down the excitement. What do you think should be done?" I said that, in my opinion, the Shah would have put himself in a much stronger position if, after arresting Ala-ed-Dowleh and his two companions, he had handed them over to the Ministry of Justice for trial. Perhaps it would not be too late to do so even now. It would be a material proof of His Majesty's professed wish to act constitutionally, and he had, by making the arrests, shown that he was strong enough to defend himself. Ala-es-Sultaneh said the Ministers had used every argument to induce His Majesty to do as I suggested, but in vain. Could I not find some means of conveying the same advice to the Palace? I said I would turn the matter over in my mind and see if anything could be done. On reflection, I decided not to move for the moment. I could not well take any step without consulting the Russian Minister, and, inasmuch as I was convinced that it was only by Russian advice that the Shah had already declined to listen to his Ministers' good counsel, it seemed likely that to broach the matter to M. de Hartwig would prove useless, and might also lead to an acrimonious discussion. It seemed to me, therefore, wiser to wait until I should have received from St. Petersburg an indication of the instructions which might be sent to M. de Hartwig as to his attitude here. Unfortunately Mr. O'Beirne's telegram, which I received on the 17th, arrived in so mutilated a state that it has been impossible to make anything of it.

During the past week I have received several telegrams from the provincial towns imploring the Legation to come to the assistance of the constitutional cause, which owed its birth to the sympathy and countenance of Great Britain. I have made no direct reply to any of the messages, but in one or two instances, when it seemed that a message from the Legation might have a soothing effect, I have instructed His Majesty's Consul that if he were asked to obtain an answer he might say that England, as a constitutional country, must always look with sympathy on a constitutional movement; but that it was not fitting or right that she should interfere in the internal affairs of a free and independent people. In any case, Persia could be assured that England's friendship for Persia was as strong as ever.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23122]

No. 54.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)(No. 147.)
Sir,*Gulahek, June 17, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a note which I have addressed to the Persian Government, in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram No. 107 of the 6th instant, on the subject of the recent cases of irregular proceedings of the Persian Customs vessels in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 54.

Mr. Marling to Ala-es-Sultaneh.

Your Highness,

Gulahek, June 14, 1908.

I RECENTLY had occasion to bring to the notice of the Administrator-General of Customs the case of a Customs launch from Bander Abbas which was found cruising in Muscat waters some 60 miles from Bander Abbas. Since then several further cases of irregular proceedings on the part of Customs launches in the Gulf have occurred.

The frequent occasions on which vessels under the Administration of Customs have been found cruising outside Persian territorial waters and taking action against vessels not flying the Persian flag, have obliged me to bring to the notice of His Majesty's Government the present irregular practices of the Customs officials in the Gulf, and I have been instructed to remind your Highness that Persian Customs launches have no right to act in the territorial waters of any foreign State unless expressly authorized to do so by Convention with the State in question, and that on the high seas they cannot interfere with any vessels except those flying the Persian flag.

I must earnestly request that these principles of international law may be adhered to, and I have to state that, if incidents such as those which have recently taken place recur, His Majesty's Government will be forced to take measures in order that the danger of retaliatory action on the part of the Arabs may be avoided, and the maritime peace of the Gulf may be preserved.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23123]

No. 55.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)(No. 148.)
Sir,*Gulahek, June 17, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Resht regarding Russian activity in the Caspian provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 55.

Vice-Consul Rabinov to Mr. Marling.

Sir,

Resht, May 20, 1908.

DURING my recent tour at Astabad I noticed that Russian activity had greatly increased of late years in the Persian Caspian provinces.

As the result of my observations may be of interest, I shall give a brief account of what I saw or gathered on the subject.

This activity may be noticed in three distinct branches, naval and military, political or Consular, and commercial.

[1599]

(A.) *Naval and Military.*

It is useless for me to refer to the various military posts on the Atrek, or on the Azerbaijan frontier, as I have not visited them.

Chikishlar and the neighbouring posts have just been visited by a General.

At some posts, as, for instance, at Chatly, 8 farsakhs from Chikishlar, there are a few field guns.

The garrison at Ashuradeh is, I understand, to be increased from 200 to 1,000 men, this increase to be effected gradually in the course of a few years. Two flat-bottomed transports are to be added to the Caspian fleet, which consists, at present, of three torpedo destroyers and three transports. The frontier posts along the Azerbaijan frontier—along its eastern portion, at least—have just been strengthened.

(B.) *Political or Consular.*

In this branch one notices great activity. There were formerly two Consulates, one at Astarabad, the other at Resht.

A Vice-Consulate has just been created at Ardebil, and had it not been feared that the Duma would refuse to sanction the extra expenditure entailed a Vice-Consulate would have been created at Enzeli.

The Consular establishment in the Persian Caspian provinces is given in the annexed Table.

A number of new Consular Agents have been created, and the Vice-Consul at Ardebil has been authorized to travel, the greater part of the year, along the Azerbaijan frontier, with permission to push on to Tabreez.

The Russian Consul at Astarabad disposes of the torpedo destroyer "Minanoski," and great is the impression caused on the natives when he suddenly lands at one of the Caspian ports, receiving the usual salute of five or seven guns.

In Astarabad he keeps aloof from the Persians, but his influence is very great.

Russian influence among the Persian Turkomans is greatly helped by the Russo-Persian Frontier Commission, which is permanently settled at Gombad-i-Kabus, about 32 miles within the Persian frontier. They were formerly at Maraveh Teppeli, on the frontier, but some eight years ago, under the pretence that the water supply at Maraveh was bad, they removed to their present quarters.

(C.) *Commercial.*

Russian influence, along the coast, owes much to the establishment of the Leonozoff fishery stations, which extend from Astara to Hassan Guli Bay, or along the whole Persian Caspian coast. The four principal stations are Astara, Enzeli, Sefid Rud, and Meshed-i-Sar, to which we may add that of Molla Kilch, at the mouth of the Karasu, 6 farsakhs north of Astarabad, in the Bay of Astarabad.

We then have the Russian roads and banks.

The roads comprise that of Khonman, usually called the Enzeli-Resht road, about 12 miles in length, then the Resht-Tehran road, and finally the Astara-Ardebil road. This latter, the Persians allege, was obtained by a trick, and without the knowledge of the Persian Government. I understand that one of the clauses of the deed of cession of this road to the Russians by the Malek-et-Tujjar of Tehran, acting in his quality of Chairman of the Ummi Company, was that the Malek should in future enjoy Russian protection. This would explain why the Russian Minister interfered on behalf of the Malek when the Tehran National Assembly gave orders, a year ago, for the latter to be put in prison.

The Russian Vice-Consul mentioned to me that the Astara-Ardebil road was very badly built, and too narrow for wheeled traffic. All the Company was doing was the collection of tolls, and they neglected necessary repairs. We may here mention the port of Enzeli, for which 800,000 roubles, or 80,000*l.*, has just been placed at the disposal of the engineers.

Natives of Enzeli easily obtain from Government cession of plots of land at Enzeli, and this land they have sold at very low prices to the Russians.* The northern end of the eastern spit of land which incloses the lagoon is already Russian, and they are now endeavouring to buy up the northern end of the western spit of land.

* The Persian Government have sent instructions to stop these abuses.

The Banque d'Escompte de Perse has a branch at Resht, and M. Rosenblum has just founded a bank at Bender Gez, with a branch at Barfrush.

There are also a number of Russian Armenian traders scattered about Astarabad, Mazanderan, and Gilan, and we must not forget the agents of the various Russian steam-ship Companies at Enzeli, Meshed-i-Sar, and Bender Gez.

The Russians have also the advantage of having Russian telegraphists at Astarabad, Bender Gez, Gumbad-i-Kabus, Resht, and probably at Barfrush or Meshed-i-Sar. A telegraphist will certainly be placed at the disposal of the Vice-Consul at Ardebil. The Consul at Resht has also the use of the Leonozoff telephone line, which extends from Sefid Rud to Talish.

The total number of Russian subjects in the Persian Caspian provinces cannot be less than 1,500, but might reach over 2,000 in taking into account the fishermen who come every year from Astrakhan for the Leonozoff fisheries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. RABINO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 55.

RUSSIAN Consular Establishment in the Persian Caspian Provinces, May 1903.

Consular District.	Town, Village, or Port.	Staff.
Astarabad ..	Astarabad ..	Consul. Secretary of Consulate (student interpreter). Native munshi. Clerk. Ten Russian Cossacks. Persian guard. Carriage. Gholam and ferrashes.
	Khoja Nefes ..	Consular Agent (native).
	Bender Gez..	" " (Russian).
	Barfrush ..	" " (native).
	Meshed-i-Sar ..	" " (Russian Armenian).
Gilan ..	Resht ..	Consul. Secretary of Consulate (student interpreter). Dragoman (student interpreter). Native munshi. One clerk. Two native clerks. Ten Russian Cossacks. Five Persian Cossacks. Carriage. Gholams and ferrashes.
	Tuncabun ..	Consular Agent (native).
	Lahijan ..	" " (native).
	Langerud ..	" " (native).
	Enzeli ..	" " (Russian Armenian). Russian clerk. Farrash.
	Talish Dulab ..	Consular Agent (native).
	Kerganrud ..	" " "
	Ardebil ..	Vice-Consul. Four clerks. Two officers and 50 Russian Cossacks. Munshi. Gholams and ferrashes.
	Astara ..	Consular Agent (native).

This list does not include the Consular Agents of the inland districts, as, for instance, Shahrud, Bastam, Lannan, &c., which are part of the Astarabad Consular district.

The Leonozoff steam-launches are always at the disposal of the Russian Consular officers.

Resht, May 20, 1903.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 150. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulshah, June 17, 1908.

IN my despatch No. 146 of the 15th June, voluminous as it is, I have not attempted to do more than give a connected summary of the most recent phase of the constitutional struggle, but there are other aspects of the question which merit attention, viz., the attitude and policy of the Russian Legation, the part played by the Zil-es-Sultan, and lastly, the attitude of the German Minister.

Since December last the policy of the Russian Legation has altered but little. At that period it was, I think, M. de Hartwig's aim to enable the Shah to overcome the Constitutional movement; but he has by now found that impossible, and is fearful lest the Shah's throne, if not his life, may be lost. Such an event would, of course, mean the loss of Russia's only trump card in Persia, and it is but natural that he should strain every nerve to prevent it.

It is open to question whether M. de Hartwig has played his cards wisely; certainly the Shah was almost from the first days of his reign the object of mistrust and suspicion, and his opposition, masked though it was for a time by the action of his Ministers, to the Constitutional movement gave the required opportunity to the Azerbaijan members to rouse public feeling against His Majesty all over the country. But what M. de Hartwig has not realized, or if he has, could not bring himself to admit, was that a great measure, possibly even all, of the Shah's unpopularity is due to the universal belief that His Majesty is the tool of Russia, and is ready to do anything to serve her ends, even to bringing about a Russian occupation. Again, the Czar's Government is credited by Persians with being opposed to liberal ideas, and the Russian Legation's action in support of the Shah has been set down as being partly inspired by reactionary views. There are even some Persians who profess to believe that but for Russian advice the Shah might have accepted the new order of things; but this is not a view to which most observers would subscribe. In these circumstances, Russian support to the Shah has defeated its own end, by making him more unpopular than ever, and the moment has now come when M. de Hartwig, seeing that the agitation against His Majesty is becoming dangerous, is making a desperate effort to bring about a joint demonstration by the two Legations avowedly in favour of his protégé. There is no doubt that joint action by us does produce a very marked impression, and must therefore be employed with great caution if His Majesty's Legation is to preserve the strict attitude of neutrality which you, Sir, have prescribed. M. de Hartwig is perfectly well aware of this, and he chose his argument well when in inviting me to make a joint representation to the Minister for Foreign Affairs he took as his ground the probable danger of international intervention in case Persia were allowed to relapse into anarchy. It was not easy to refuse his appeal, but to make sure that he should adhere faithfully to the line of argument he had sketched, I wrote him a note urging that we ought to be very careful to avoid anything that could suggest intervention by the two Powers, as any hint of the kind would probably react unfavourably on the Shah, who was credited with desiring to bring about intervention from Russia. M. de Hartwig replied cordially agreeing, and in our interviews with Mashir-ed-Dowleh and Azad-ul-Mulk he loyally excluded any hint of intervention by the two Powers, but as I pointed out in my despatch No. 146 he contrived to introduce a note of menace which, I think, produced an undesirable effect on his hearers.

In the two conversations which I have had, on the 11th and 15th respectively, on his proposal for a joint declaration that the Governments of Great Britain and Russia are pledged to maintain the present Shah, and are prepared to do so by force if necessary, I have been chiefly struck by M. de Hartwig's ingenuity in finding arguments to persuade me that such a step is obligatory and expedient.

When I observed that I did not think that His Majesty's Government would consider that by their recognition of the successive heirs to the Throne of Persia there had ever been any intention of guaranteeing the Kajar dynasty, and much less of forcibly maintaining an individual Shah, he produced "Hertslet's Persian Treaties," and read the extract given on p. 216 from Count Nesselrode's despatch to Count Modem in connection with this question.

"Now," he exclaimed, "if the Shah were deposed, should we not find ourselves in face of just the circumstances contemplated, viz., the danger of a civil war in consequence

of a disputed succession? The Shah has three or four sons and four brothers, all of whom may aspire to the throne, and each of whom has at any rate a better claim to it than Zil-es-Sultan."

I said that the conditions of Persia when that despatch was written were very different from those now prevailing, and that even if His Majesty's Government could admit his interpretation of the intentions of the Governments when Count Nesselrode's despatch was penned, it would be repugnant to our ideas of the rights of a constitutional people, as the Persians now are, that we should attempt to force a particular Sovereign on them.

"If that is your idea," he rejoined, "I am a much better constitutionalist than you. The Shah has no hostility to the Constitution, but is perfectly ready to work harmoniously with it. All the agitation against him is fictitious, and is worked up by Zil-es-Sultan, who is plotting with a few friends to oust his nephew and obtain the throne for himself, and if the Zil came to the throne the Medjliss would not exist a fortnight. If your Government is going to adopt that attitude, you and I will have to fold our arms and watch the Shah being assassinated."

At this point M. de Hartwig got quite heated, and for a moment I feared would lose his temper.

I said the one thing that I always kept before me was the paramount importance of preserving the policy of common action in Persia, and if he and I took different views on any matter we must refer them to our Governments, who would indicate the line to be followed by us jointly. This was a case for such reference, for there certainly was a divergence of views between us on two points: firstly, the question of our obligation to maintain the Shah; and secondly, how far the animosity against the Shah was fictitious, as he asserted, or genuine and deep-rooted, as I was convinced was unfortunately the case. I was quite ready to admit that the Zil had designs on the throne, and was trying to forward them. The present crisis gave him an opportunity of doing so, but he had not, so far as I could see, done anything to bring it about. He had found the situation, not created it.

The Russian Minister then hinted that though he was satisfied that my own attitude was perfectly correct, he was not so sure about all the members of the Legation, and said that a visit which Mr. Churehill paid to the President of the Assembly a day or two before had given rise to much comment.

I replied that I was completely satisfied that neither Mr. Churchill nor any one else in His Majesty's Legation ever wittingly said or did anything contrary to the general lines laid down by His Majesty's Government of strict non-interference in internal affairs; but M. de Hartwig, with a look of incredulity, interrupted me by reverting to the Zil, whose brutal character, he said, was in such marked contrast to the amiable disposition of the Shah. According to the Russian Minister, His Majesty had undergone a complete transformation. When Valiahd in Tabreez, he had acquired a reputation for tyranny and oppression which, though grossly exaggerated, was to some extent justified; but those who knew him in Tabreez would now scarcely recognize the Shah in the mild, benevolent Sovereign, who desired only to live a quiet life with his wife and family, and leave the affairs of State to the constitutional Ministers. The Shah, in fact, had only one vice, namely, avarice, and if His Majesty could only bring himself to spend money as freely as Zil-es-Sultan, he would be as popular personally as had been his father, Muzaffer-ed-Din Shah.

I cannot pretend to have the same means as M. de Hartwig for knowing what the Shah's real character is, but I can learn nothing of His Majesty that goes to show that his disposition or sentiments towards the Medjliss have undergone the radical change which M. de Hartwig would have me believe. No doubt very many of the reports of his intrigues to create disorders and render government impossible are untrue, and some of them palpably so, as, for instance, the story that he had contrived the burglary at M. Ostrogradsky's house so as to create the impression that foreigners are in danger, and so give a pretext for Russian intervention, but in view of the fact that even Persian Ministers have complained to me of his constant interference with their labours, I consider it beyond doubt that His Majesty still continues his pernicious activity, or at least permits intrigues to be carried on by his *entourage* in his supposed interests.

Most of his arguments M. de Hartwig employed in both our conversations, and it was only in the second that he developed the startling suggestion that Zil-es-Sultan, if he came to the throne, would at once turn to Germany. "Do not count," he said, as though taking it for granted that the Zil is receiving encouragement from us, "on Zil-es-Sultan's fidelity to you. I happen to know that as soon as he has achieved his ambition he will abandon you for the Germans."

I asked M. de Hartwig what reason he had for thinking that Zil-es-Sultan was turning his eyes towards Germany, but though I pressed him for proofs he could or would say no more than that Jelal-el-Dowleh's intimacy with the German Legation was notorious. He went on to enlarge on Zil-es-Sultan's enormous wealth, averring that His Imperial Highness possessed about 60,000,000 tomans (12,000,000*l.*) banked in Calcutta.

I pointed out that it was incredible that the Zil could have saved anything like this vast sum. It was true that he had been for many years Governor of a large part of Persia, but a fortune of 12,000,000*l.* meant that he must have put by something like 400,000*l.* a-year for thirty years, and that in spite of the heavy expenditure he had had to bear. The only trustworthy figure I had ever had of the Zil's fortune in India was something under 300,000*l.*

M. de Hartwig retorted he was better informed, and went on to say that the Zil once at the head of affairs would contract a loan of some 10,000,000—presumably of roubles—in Germany, and give 2,000,000 roubles of his own fortune as security. I could not get the Minister to explain further what the nature of this operation was to be.

I told M. de Hartwig that I did not believe that the Zil had any German sympathies whatever, and that I thought the idea had been suggested by someone who wished to sow mistrust between us. I begged him also to believe that the Zil never got the smallest encouragement from us. His Imperial Highness had frequently sent messages to me through His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, and I had occasionally answered them, but always in such a way as to discourage him and to show him that he need not look to Great Britain for support or even countenance in his designs upon the throne.

I can hardly imagine that M. de Hartwig really believed in the Zil's alleged German proclivities. Surely if he had any real proof of them he would have produced something better than that the Zil's eldest son was on intimate terms with the German Legation. Even if this be true, and I am not aware that it is, it is not particularly convincing, in view of the fact that there is little love lost between Zil-es-Sultan and Jelal-ed-Dowleh, and that it is probable that the latter had only been allured of late to work in his father's interests by the prospect of succeeding him on the throne.

It would appear that M. de Hartwig sees that the Shah's cause is fast losing ground, that some very decisive step must be taken to retrieve it, and that the only one which will be permanently effective will be a joint declaration from the two Governments, virtually to the effect that the Shah is under their protection. He is, of course, aware that His Majesty's Government is little likely to agree to any such step, and is now drawing on his imagination to furnish his Government with arguments to support his proposal.

Of course if the Shah disappears from the scene, Russia's only trump card is drawn, and M. de Hartwig sees that with the Zil's known friendly disposition to us; that the predominating position that he had hoped to gain for Russia will become ours, and with the additional advantage that popular sentiment is comparatively favourable to us.

As to the Zil, it is very difficult to say how far he has ventured to go. That he is aiming high there can be no doubt, and I think there are few persons who would be rash enough to predict that the Valiahd would ever reach the throne if his ambitious great uncle were to be nominated Regent. His Imperial Highness has unquestionably tried to obtain the joint Governorship of Fars and Ispahan, as is proved by a letter he sent to Mr. Consul-General Grahame, begging him to use his influence on his arrival at Ispahan to further that object. Mr. Grahame brought the letter with him to Tehran, and, with my assistance, drafted a very cautiously worded reply dissuading his Imperial Highness from his project, but, by an oversight, the letter was never dispatched. It seems probable also that he initiated an intrigue to get the appointment of War Minister for one of his friends, but the scheme failed, and the portfolio was given to Mustaufi-ul-Mamalek, who declined to play into the hands of the conspirators.

But, with all his ambition, Zil-es-Sultan is very cautious, and I doubt very much whether he has done more than improve the opportunities which the Shah's evil star seems to be providing for him. From his conversations with Mr. Acting-Consul Bill and his messages to the Legation, it is quite clear that he understands the position of the Legation towards himself to a nicety, viz., that while we desire to remain on friendly terms with him, we can do nothing to forward or even countenance his political designs, or to defend him if they involve him in trouble; it is probable that he rather appreciates the perfect loyalty of our attitude towards the Shah, and calculates that, if ever he comes to the throne, he will be able to count on our cordial support.

I do not think any one knows what the feelings of the Zil towards the constitutional

movement really are; of course his professions of devotion to it are unlimited, but it seems inconceivable that, after the years he had spent in governing various provinces with absolute power, he should consent to be checked at every turn by the Anjumens. Persia as a whole might welcome him as a strong ruler who would restore order, but, in the minds of the more thoughtful reformers, there are serious misgivings as to his fitness for the post of a constitutional King. Meantime, telegrams are being addressed to him, praying him from the Anjumens of all the principal towns to take over the reins of Government, but this does not necessarily imply that he is wanted for his own sake, but only that the country is weary of anarchy, and would accept any one who would put an end to it.

There has been some little talk among the Anjumens of taking "bast" at the German Legation. It is, of course, the direct result of Baron von Richthofen's activity six months ago, but to some extent, it is unquestionably due to the uncompromising attitude I have always observed to discourage any attempt to drag the Legation into internal politics. The German Minister told me the other day that he had let it be known in the clearest way that he would not receive refugees in his Legation, but he has not taken the obvious means of discouraging them, *i.e.*, by keeping the gates of the German Legation closed, nor, as I have the best means of knowing, did M. Litten, the German Dragoman, give an unequivocal answer to a Persian who called to inquire ostensibly on behalf of the Anjumens what the attitude of the Legation in the question of "bast" would be. I have, however, no reason to believe that Count Quadt is doing anything to encourage the Popular party to appeal to Germany, though it is of course quite probable that he would not be averse to seeing such an appeal made. On the other hand, he had once or twice tried to impress on me the disadvantages which must result to us in this country from our recent Agreement with Russia. I replied generally that every arrangement must have some drawbacks, but I was personally satisfied that our present policy of complete understanding with Russia in Persian affairs would in the end be completely justified.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23128]

No. 57.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 153.)
Sir,

Gulahak, June 17, 1908.

IN accordance with the sanction conveyed to me in your telegram No. 29 of the 26th February last, the increased escort attached to His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz was retained for six months. That period has now elapsed, and I have received a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at that place inquiring whether any decision has been arrived at in regard to the question of permanently increasing the escort of the Consulate from six to twelve men.

Though the retention of the time-expired party of men was authorized pending an improvement in the affairs of Fars, and there is reason to hope that such an improvement may, as a result of the appointment of His Imperial Highness the Zil-es-Sultan as Governor-General of the province, be maintained, His Imperial Highness' tenure of the post is, as is that of every Governor of Persia, very precarious, and his removal would inevitably be the occasion of an outburst of fresh disorders throughout the province.

I venture, therefore, to support Mr. Bill in the opinion which he has expressed, and in which, moreover, he had the entire concurrence of Mr. Grahame, that the situation in Shiraz still contains the elements of those dangers the active manifestation of which caused the retention of the present escort to be sanctioned, and consequently demands the presence of a larger escort than was formerly the case.

It is, however, desirable, and, in the case of one of the men who is ill, urgent, that the time-expired men should be relieved; and though I should regret their withdrawal from Shiraz until arrangements have been made to replace them, I venture to request that the question of their return to India, and of replacing them by a fresh contingent, may be taken into consideration, and, if possible, settled at an early date.

I must add that Mr. Grahame, on his way through Tehran, mentioned to me the desirability of a small number of spare rifles being kept in the Consulate for the use of the British colony in case of emergency, and suggested that the relieved escort might leave their rifles behind them upon their departure. The Legation here is provided

with a small number of rifles for this purpose, and I venture to submit, for your favourable consideration, that a similar arrangement in the case of Shiraz would be a prudent precaution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23130]

No. 58.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 155.)

Sir,

Gulahak, June 17, 1908.

I RECENTLY observed in the Bander Abbas section of the Persian Gulf Diary a paragraph to the effect that 1,500 tons of red oxide were shipped by Messrs. Strick in the steam-ship "Lauristan," from Hormuz Island to London about the end of April. Being under the impression that Messrs. Strick's contract with the Muin-et-Tujjar was to have expired on the 21st December last, I inquired by telegraph of His Majesty's Consul-General under what arrangement Messrs. Strick were now shipping the oxide.

In reply Major Cox telegraphed that Mr. Malcolm, the Bushire agent of Messrs. Strick, had reason to believe that his principals had concluded a secret contract with Muin-et-Tujjar, though they had not taken him into their confidence. Mr. Malcolm further stated that he had been approached by a certain Sadik-ul-Mamalek, an enemy of Muin-et-Tujjar; this individual professed his ability to obtain a lease of Hormuz Island independently of Muin-et-Tujjar, provided that Mr. Malcolm would, in the capacity of a Persian subject, join him as a partner, or, failing that, be his guarantor as a British subject. Mr. Malcolm had not replied to these overtures; he wished for advice, and would not hesitate to join Sadik-ul-Mamalek, should his star appear to be in the ascendant and that of the Muin-et-Tujjar on the wane.

The whole transaction appeared to me to be of very doubtful honesty, while the suggestion that Mr. Malcolm should change his nationality, as best suited his temporary interests, lent it a particularly unpleasant complexion. I accordingly replied to Major Cox that nothing was known at this Legation of Sadik-ul-Mamalek or of his ability to obtain a transfer to himself of the lease of Hormuz Island; that I had no reason to believe that Muin-et-Tujjar's position was weakened, and that in my opinion the transaction should be discouraged, at any rate until it became known whether Messrs. Ellinger's scheme to form a Company would be realized or not.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23131]

No. 59.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 156.)

Sir,

Gulahak, June 17, 1908.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 2 of the 8th January last, inclosing copy of a letter from the Imperial Bank of Persia respecting the Nasratabad branch of the bank, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan whom I requested to furnish a report upon the working of the bank.

Major Kennion's despatch was submitted to Mr. Rabino, for his observations, which appear marginally upon the despatch in question, and I further inclose a letter from Mr. Hawkins, a member of the London Board of Directors of the bank, now in Tehran, whose opinion I asked in regard to the correspondence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 4 in No. 59.

Consul Kennion to Mr. Marling.

(No. 17.)

Sir,

Seistan, March 30, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 12, dated the 12th February last, regarding the working of the Nasratabad branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia, with inclosures (returned herewith).

I am directed to state what, in my opinion, are the reasons for which this branch has been working at a loss, and to suggest means by which it might be possible to remedy this state of affairs.

I would remark, in the first place, that the Memorandum of working expenses inclosed with your despatch does not convey a just idea of the return on the capital actually employed on banking transactions. Money was spent on a site, buildings, and furniture, altogether out of proportion to the amount of business a bank could expect to transact in Seistan. The buildings included two good houses, one of which is occupied by the Manager and his wife, the other by the Vice-Consul and Consulate Doctor, besides an office, servants' quarters, &c. The area taken up is in excess of what was necessary, and was, I understand, only acquired as it might otherwise have been purchased by the Russians. The excessive price paid for the land (5 krans per zer) must have been due to a similar reason, for 2 krans per zer, the rate at which the Consulate land was bought, is certainly not low.*

Thus, of the capital of 10,000*l.* allotted to the branch, some 5,000*l.* was initial expenditure, while a similar sum represents the actual working capital in the Manager's control. The cost of buildings and furniture is, it seems, written off at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, the charge being added to the working expenses of the bank. Repairs to the same form another annual charge, so that in twenty years' time the houses will stand as an asset to the bank, paid for entirely by the earnings of the local branch. Though I understand that this is in accordance with commercial custom, it is, to my mind, questionable whether it is correct to show the charge as a working expense under the special circumstances of the case. Since the branch is maintained mainly at the expense of the Government of India, it seems to me that either the buildings should, at the expiry of the twenty years, become their property, or that the building fund should be kept entirely separate from the profit and loss account of the branch.

Burdened as at present it is by the charges referred to, the local branch can hardly be expected to work otherwise than at a loss.

As regards the question why the gross earnings of the branch are not higher, I would submit the following observations:—

With a working capital of 5,000*l.* the branch earned:—

Year ending September	1904	1905	1906	1907	£	s.	d.
" "	"	"	"	"	..	1	16 2
" "	"	"	"	"	..	240	4 9
" "	"	"	"	"	..	353	12 5
" "	"	"	"	"	..	391	0 0

There has thus been a steady, if slow, increase, last year's figures amounting to approximately 8 per cent. on the capital employed.

The business of the bank is almost entirely confined to exchange, buying, and selling drafts and discounting bills. The rates charged by the bank for drafts are high, varying from 1 per cent. to 2½ per cent., and if business were brisk money could be made very rapidly. There is, however, a very limited demand for this class of business in Seistan, and till within the last year a considerable portion of the working capital was, I believe, lying idle. Another class of business, however, offered, of which more could have been made, and, in my opinion, ought to have been made. I refer to loans to Persians of position. During the year under report and since the following loans made by the branch came to my knowledge:—

1. June 1907. — The Shaukat-ul-Mulk, 10,000 krans at 12 per cent., payable in fourteen days.
2. September 1907. — Shaukat-ul-Mulk, 20,000 krans at 12 per cent., payable in two months.
3. February 1908. — Shaukat-ul-Mulk, 30,000 krans at 15 per cent., payable in fifteen days.
4. February 1908. — Nurb of Darmian, 5,000 krans at 15 per cent., payable in three months.
5. February 1908. — Sardar Pasand Khan, 3,000 krans, interest and period unknown.

These were all recovered when due without difficulty; 4 and 5 are not yet due.

* Our funds were forced; land could only be bought from the Government, who imposed their conditions.—L.R.

The following are among the applications for loans which were refused :—

1. April 1907.—Shaukat-ul-Mulk, 150,000 krans for six to twelve months.
2. June 1907.—Shaukat-ul-Mulk, 50,000 krans for two months. (Applied for after the loan of 40,000 krans had been repaid.)
3. June 1907.—Malek-et-Tujjar, 30,000 krans for three months.
4. June 1907.—Mustaufi, 30,000 krans for three months.
5. August 1907.—Naib of Darmian, 3,000 krans for three months.
6. November 1907.—Malek-et-Tujjar, 20,000 krans for four months.
7. February 1908.—Mustaufi, Birjand, 10,000 krans for three months. (The two latter were intended for purchasing trade goods in India.)

The security offered in each case was, I believe, sufficient to satisfy the local Manager, but the sanction of the head office was refused. The reason assigned for these refusals was the disturbed state of Persia. Their caution may or may not be justified. It is, at the same time, noteworthy that Kain and Seistan have been among the quietest districts in Persia. What I cannot help thinking may have had more to say to the bank's attitude is that the local branch's capital would have been insufficient to furnish these loans without crippling themselves as regards the exchange business, and that the head office was unwilling to withdraw capital from branches doing the more paying kind of business to enable the Seistan branch to transact business of a less paying kind.* I would observe that though loans are considerably less remunerative than exchange transactions, yet they return not less than 12 to 18 per cent. as well as the commission on the draft, by which the money is remitted to Tehran or Meshed as the case may be, for they are rarely required for local use.

I think it probable that the branch could have increased its earnings if it had to some extent imitated the Russian Bank in setting up a commercial agency supplementary to their exchange business with India.† In this connection I would request a reference to Sir H. McMahon's diary for the period ending the 24th November, 1903.

Another reason for the earnings of the branch being smaller than they need have been is that though at the outset the possibilities of Birjand were recognized—Mr. Newell in his letter of the 22nd July, 1904, to the Foreign Office correctly referred to it as "a far more important place than Nasratabad as a trade distributing centre"—the bank, till the middle of 1906 to 1907, showed little energy in pushing their business in this place. Had they done so, it is my belief the profits of the Seistan branch would by now have been considerably larger than they are.

I now come to suggestions for the future. In February 1907 an agency to the Seistan branch was started at Birjand in charge of Mr. Howson. This has proved very successful, and business has increased in a very satisfactory manner. Mr. Macmurray, the local Manager, is hopeful that with the assistance of this agency there will be no loss on the working of the branch for the current year.‡ Lately, however, the operations of the branch have been cramped for want of capital.

Many applications for drafts on India have been received at Birjand, but owing to the branch's want of funds in India,§ the rates quoted were too high and no business ensued. Want of funds in Meshed and Seistan have similarly resulted in applications for drafts on these places being refused. It is obvious that in order to give the branch a fair chance of paying its way it should not be starved of funds. My suggestion is therefore that the capital of the Seistan branch should be increased to admit of an increase in the exchange business as well as to provide for loans.

The successful result of the Birjand agency under Mr. Howson, the greater part of whose time is taken up with other work, indicates that it would be advisable for the bank to have a properly qualified agent at this place.

From a commercial point of view, it would indeed have been better that Birjand should have been made the local head-quarters of the branch from the first, but this is now out of the question owing to the amount of capital sunk in land and buildings in Seistan. For the present the agent at Birjand should be a native of Persia on moderate pay. A house could be rented for him in the city; so no expenditure on land or buildings would be necessary.

The others means by which, in my opinion, the profits of the branch could be increased have already been indicated in the part of this letter dealing with causes of past failure.

* No. — Seistan can have any amount of capital from Tehran.—J.R.

† Events have proved, as we have maintained, that this class of business is unsound.—V.A.C.H.

‡ No. — J.R.

My recommendations may be summarized as under :—

1. The working capital of the branch should be increased.
2. Loans should not be refused if, in the opinion of the local Manager, the security offered is sufficient.
3. The Manager should be authorized to carry on an agency business for the supply of British Indian goods on the Russian deposit system.
4. A properly qualified agent should be appointed to Birjand.

The political aspect of the question, with special reference to 2 and 3 above, have been dealt with in my letters No. 162, dated the 24th August, 1907, and No. 27, dated the 31st January last, to the Government of India.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. L. KENNION, Major, I.A.

Inclosure 2 in No. 59.

Mr. Hawkins to Mr. Marling.

Dear Mr. Marling,

Tehran, June 8, 1908.

SEISTAN despatch No. 17 of the 30th ultimo, from Major Kennion.

Pressure of work has prevented me from giving earlier attention to the above. However, I have gone carefully into it, and cannot but confirm the marginal note placed on it by Mr. Rabino.

Major Kennion appears to have formed quite a wrong opinion as regards capital. We would let Seistan have as much capital as the place requires if it could be safely employed; but that is the rub. Most of the business offering is the loaning out of money to the titled gentry class. Past experience has proved it to be undesirable, and the present position of the country does not warrant our extending such business.

Major Kennion suggests that the Imperial Bank of Persia follow the example of the Russian Bank in setting up a commercial agency, supplementary to general banking business. Major Kennion cannot be cognizant of the colossal losses the Russian Bank have made in the last few years in carrying out their scheme, which, from a banking point of view, is unsound.

We want to see Seistan paying as strongly as Major Kennion does, but the fact is there really is no actual business that warrants the bank as a commercial proposition, *per se*, having a branch there.

On the matter of the statement of account, I can make no comments, as it doubtless has the sanction of the full Board in the usual way, and seems reasonable. The property would not be worth much if we closed the branch.

If there is any other point which I may have omitted, pray command me.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) V. A. CESAR HAWKINS.

[23132]

No. 60.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 157.)

Sir,

Tehran, June 17, 1908.

IN reply to your despatch No. 70 of the 9th ultimo, in which you were so good as to forward, for observations, a Memorandum by Mr. Rees, M.P., I have the honour to transmit herewith an admirable and lucid Memorandum, drawn up by Mr. Lorraine, after consultation with myself, examining and discussing, in a manner which is entirely in accord with my own views on the subject, the suggestions put forward by Mr. Rees for the utilization of the situation created by the recent Anglo-Russian Convention.

Mr. Lorraine draws especial attention to the expediency of considering what steps should be taken for the development of means of communication in south-western Persia, and the importance of this is, I venture to think, largely emphasized by the recent discovery of an oil well in Arabistan, the only information in regard to which that has yet reached me I had the honour of reporting in my telegram No. 126 of the 28th ultimo. From such meagre facts as are available it is, of course, impossible to estimate whether oil has been, or will now be, struck in sufficient quantities for the

laying of a pipe line and the regular exploitation of the Concession as a paying concern. Should such, however, prove to be the case, a great impetus will infallibly be given to the development of the neighbouring regions, and the port of export, presumably Mohammerah, will at once assume an importance it has not hitherto possessed.

In the corner of Persia affected circumstances are peculiarly favourable to the expansion and consolidation of British interests. The firm of Messrs. Lynch Brothers occupies a prominent position at Mohammerah and Ahwaz, the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company have a steamer service on the Karun, in the hinterland is the Bakhtiari road constructed by British enterprise, the Oil Syndicate is well known in the district through those of its officers who have been conducting the boring operations in recent years, and, lastly, in view of our special relations with the Sheikh of Mohammerah in particular and in a lesser degree with the Bakhtiari Khans, nothing would be more natural than for us to take the lead in the development of the regions which they govern. I entirely agree with Mr. Loraine that the construction of a railway from Mohammerah to the capital would most materially contribute to the desired end.

The reflection will not have escaped you, Sir, that such a project might encounter opposition from Russia. In this case, however, I venture to think that Russian interests in some degree coincide with our own. Russia is perhaps, even more than ourselves, interested in preventing the internationalization of Persian affairs. If we draw back from the task, or are prevented from undertaking it by considerations of Russian interests, the door is left open for its assumption by a third Power. Should that Power be successful in grasping the opportunity offered it and in effecting a serious lodgment in south-western Persia, its Representative at Tehran would automatically acquire an influence and a voice in Persian affairs that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to gainsay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 60.

Memorandum by Mr. Loraine.

[Foreign Office Despatch No. 70 (13220) of May 6, 1908.]

THREE points for discussion stand out clearly from Mr. Rees's Memorandum:—

1. The feasibility and expediency of the course he proposes.
2. The opportuneness of the moment for initiating it.
3. The fitness of the means he proposes to attain his ends.

The gist of the Memorandum lies in the last five lines: "If once there are proper communications in the south the development of the north by Russia will do us no harm, and might, indeed, result in good, but unless communications are improved trade will surely be diverted to the northern outlet."

This, as a general proposition, may be accepted, but Mr. Rees does not appear to consider to what extent our interests clash, or coincide, with others which we are bound to respect. These other interests are: (1) Persian; (2) Russian. In view of German activity and ambitions, a third category might be added for German interests. This, however, is not necessary, because all arrangements made must necessarily possess the consent of the Persian Government; equally any arrangements affecting the neutral zone must, in virtue of the Anglo-Russian Convention, possess the acquiescence of Russia. German protest against arrangements made by common agreement between Great Britain, Russia, and Persia would be unavailing.

The reasons for which it is necessary to consult Persian interests are too obvious to need discussion. Persia would unquestionably profit by improved communications in the south and south-west, and, what is perhaps equally important, by security of communication along the main arteries of trade. It is needless to point out that any arrangements for improved communications, which do not provide for security on the lines of communication are not only of doubtful benefit to the country, but also involve certain loss to the contractors. This at once raises the question of the actual ability of the Persian Government unaided to guarantee security on the roads. This question has been treated in many Reports from this Legation, and it is only necessary to summarize the general conclusion, viz., that for the present the Persian Government are unable to do so.

Persia has to-day better communications in the north than in the south and south-west. Especially in the south-west the natural, and particularly the agricultural, resources of the country are great, and are capable of great, if not indefinite expansion. Proper communications in the south and south-west would aid this expansion, and facilitate the flow of trade to an open market, instead of to a closed one in the north. From a Persian point of view they are therefore desirable.

The two main causes which have hampered the development in the south are: (1) geographical; (2) political.

This remark must not be construed as a statement that nothing has been done in the south. Work has been done, in some cases good work; but not as much as would have been the case with a Persia imbued with a true insight into her own needs, free enough and strong enough to provide for those needs.

As regards (1), the difficulties are great, but not insurmountable. The question is in reality more closely connected with that of the means which Mr. Rees would use to gain his ends.

As regards (2), it is a notorious fact that Russian influence has in the past been thrown in the scale to prevent the development of Southern Persia, except by penetration from the north. The general policy has been to leave the southern portions of Persia in a state of receptivity attendant upon the gradual advance southwards of the Russian trade frontier. This policy has to some extent been frustrated by British action.

Mr. Rees is of opinion that Russian development in the north may be regarded with equanimity once proper communications are established in the south. The proposition is true; but its converse is truer, namely, that proper communications in the south will seriously threaten Russian ascendancy in the north. Briefly, then, British and Persian interests demand improved communications in the south; Russian interests run counter. The fact that the Anglo-Russian Convention exists cannot efface the logical divergence of interest; and Russia has the right to be consulted. It must also be borne in mind that of two of the roads mentioned by Mr. Rees one, that from Kerman to Yazd, terminates in the Russian zone; the other, from Isfahan to Kum, is completely within it, though this latter is of course covered by the maintenance of existing concessions.

The above considerations are in no way intended to serve as reasons against aiming at action somewhat on the lines suggested by Mr. Rees, but they are facts which must be fully realized if it be desired to form a just estimate of the difficulties such action will encounter. The Foreign Office alone is competent to judge how far, and in what direction, it may be possible to conciliate or compensate Russian interests.

Two more important points remain to be discussed:—

1. The opportuneness of the present moment for demanding the fulfilment of existing concessions or the grant of fresh ones.
2. The fitness of the means suggested by Mr. Rees for the achievement of the object he has in view.

1. There seems to be some ground for calling in question the logic of Mr. Rees' reasoning that the filing of an application for a concession by one party debars a Government from bestowing that concession in another quarter. The previous applicant is only morally in a stronger position.

Enough has been said in previous reports about the present temper in Persia in regard to foreign concessions; they are regarded with mistrust and suspicion. Unless public opinion veer round in a totally unexpected way, or the Persian public become convinced that it is useless to undertake any enterprise on a large scale without foreign expert advice and assistance, or the autocracy be restored, no concessions will be granted voluntarily. To buy them would be so difficult as to admit of that contingency being ruled out.

In a despatch to the Foreign Office dated the 29th January, 1907, Sir C. Spring-Rice wrote:—

"In the meantime, I think it well to bear in mind that the successful prosecution of enterprises in Persia must depend on the foreign Companies being able to conciliate local sentiment. This is an extremely difficult matter in the present state of public feeling, and the difficulty is intensified by the passive, and sometimes active, resistance of the Persian Government itself. The experiences of the Russian Legation are even more disagreeable than our own, and the only way in which the Russians have been able to prosecute their enterprises here is by an occasional resort to force, which is facilitated by their imposing military position on the frontier, or by a lavish expenditure of public

money, which I fear would be quite out of the question in a country like ours, where such expenditure must be sanctioned, after due inquiry, by the Representatives of the nation.

"Messrs. Lynch, however, may rest assured that the Legation will do all in its power to promote their interests, although it is only fair to warn them beforehand against attaching undue importance to the efficacy of diplomatic intervention. The Persian Government and people appreciate but two arguments—money and force—and neither the one nor the other can be employed by this Legation without authority from His Majesty's Government. The German Legation may possibly be able, by arriving at an understanding with the leaders of the Popular party, to obtain concessions in various parts of Persia, but the German concessionnaires will in their turn have to deal with the same difficulties as now confront the English and Russian, and which have already proved the ruin of the various Belgian enterprises, with such disastrous financial results."

This statement has lost nothing of its force or accuracy since the day it was written. All present indications tend to show that this state of things will last for some years to come; the one eventuality in which the Persia of to-day may grant concessions is that of her seeking a foreign loan.

I now pass to an examination of the means which Mr. Rees suggests to attain his end. He says: "The Persian Transport Company . . . ought to be encouraged to complete their system of communications as soon as possible. They might also apply for the necessary concessions to the south-east of the present sphere of their activities. Means of transport should be improved by the construction of roads, or eventually, in the distant future, perhaps railways, in the British and neutral zones from the gulf littoral towards Isfahan, Yezd, and Kerman."

To deal individually with some of Mr. Rees' suggestions it may be observed that the difficulties in the way of opening up the Laristan route via Dizful and Khorremabad have, on examination, proved to be so great that His Majesty's Government have decided to take no further action for the present in the matter. Along the Isfahan-Kum road carriages and postal fourgons travel without difficulty and regularly. Its continuation is even practicable for carriages as far as Shiraz. Thirdly, the existing road from Yezd to Kerman is, though not a built road, an unusually good one, and perfectly practicable for wheeled traffic throughout its length.

Examined from a more general point of view, Mr. Rees' remedy, with all due respect to him, must, I think, be regarded as no more than a palliative for the defect which he wishes to treat; and, moreover, as a palliative to which success is by no means assured. While we are peddling with road concessions in the south, Russia will be exacting her compensation in the north. And that compensation will be railways. Railways are the cure, too, for the south. Mr. Whigham, in his "Persian Problem," has put the case of road v. railway well. "Mule tracks and roads," he says, "are antiquated methods of communication in these days, and it is not at all certain that it is not a sheer waste of money and time to insist on the gradual evolution of trade channels by the various stages of track, road, and rail. Roads in civilized countries have long since ceased to be main arteries of traffic. They can properly be regarded only as feeders. If Japan a few years ago had been persuaded that she must rise gradually to naval power by first building wooden sailing ships, and afterwards ironclads, she would certainly not have reached the position which she occupies to-day. It is hardly less ridiculous to insist that a country must be covered with a network of roads before she is worthy of a railway. It will be remembered that the Government of India was with difficulty persuaded to build railways in Upper Burma after the last war, the same argument being used that roads must precede railways. Fortunately, the railway was strategically necessary, and was therefore built, and proved so successful from a commercial point of view that it is difficult to understand the mental attitude of those who opposed it." Mr. Whigham further cites the cases of China and Uganda in support of his contention, and adds: "Given railways for the main channels of trade, roads, as feeders, will speedily follow. But to insist on the road first is really to postpone progress for an indefinite period."

Though this statement may perhaps be criticized in point of detail, its general reasoning is difficult to refute; nor does the fact that Persia is already provided with roads to a certain extent in any way detract from its force—if anything, the reverse. In Persia, moreover, foreign roads have not been an unqualified success. Carriage roads are a convenience for the rich, but it is very doubtful whether they have given much impetus to trade; the vast majority of merchandise is mule- and camel-borne,

and the muleteer or camelteer naturally prefers a track—which after all meets his requirements—where he pays nothing, to a carriage road, where he is asked to pay tolls and probably charged very high prices for his beasts' fodder. The Russian Resht-Tehran road is certainly run at a loss, and the exaction of tolls is a certain bar to the conciliation of local sentiment which Sir C. Spring-Rice declares to be so necessary. Railways cut the Gordian knot. They must be protected by some means or other, because repairing damage to them is a costly undertaking, and constant damage is paralyzing; besides which the native commercial community, which can usually make itself heard, would quickly realize the importance of keeping them open. Moreover, the utility of building a road which is eventually to be converted into a railway is open to serious question. If it is to be ballasted and graded so as to carry a railway, why not build a railway at once? Even the roads, as Mr. Rees points out, would require a guarantee. If once the principle of guarantees be admitted, it would seem logical and politic not to confine its application to the half-measure of road construction, but to extend it at once to railways. The risk of a railway is undoubtedly the greater, but if, as appears from Mr. Rees' Memorandum, that risk is eventually contemplated, why not grapple the problem at once? There is, too, another argument in favour of railways, and that is their inherent political influence. It is wished to have an orderly Persia; at the present moment the Central Government has the greatest difficulty in asserting and maintaining its authority in the provinces; nothing is better calculated than railways to assist them in this task.

The financial problem is, of course, the most difficult of solution. But if Russia and England agree upon a railway scheme, that scheme is morally certain to go through sooner or later; nor would there be any disadvantage in any surplus customs revenue being pledged to those two Powers for such a purpose. Even if the railway itself did not pay for many years, both Great Britain and Russia would benefit considerably, though indirectly, in the way of trade, especially the former and India.

A discussion of what railways should first be built is beyond the scope of this Memorandum; but from the Persian and British point of view it is hardly doubtful that the line from Mohammerah to Tehran via the Diz Valley is of primary importance. It is apparently the line of least resistance from the seaboard to the Iranian plateau; it is the shortest route, it traverses good country, it debouches at what is, for the Persian Gulf, a good port, and not an open roadstead like Bushire.

In conclusion, it is undoubtedly desirable to take advantage of, and consolidate with as little delay as possible, the position created by the Anglo-Russian Convention. South-West Persia is the area on which we should first concentrate our energy. This area being within the neutral zone, all action must be taken after consultation with Russia. Russia has a free hand in the north. But assuming that His Majesty's Government intend to hold Persia to Nasr-ed-Din Shah's pledge in regard to railway construction, we are in a position to negotiate on equal terms with Russia as regards that portion of any projected trunk line from south to north which falls outside the Russian zone. The road policy has been tested, and cannot be said to have proved very satisfactory. It ought, therefore, to be taken into serious consideration whether the time has not now come to discard that policy and substitute for it a railway policy.

(Signed) PERCY L. LORAINÉ.

Gulahak, June 16, 1908.

[23133]

No. 61.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 158.)

Sir,

Gulahak, June 17, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 131 of the 21st ultimo on the subject of the Turco-Persian frontier, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a note which I have received from the Persian Government, inclosing telegraphic reports from Urumia in regard to the action of the Turkish frontier officials in encouraging the Kurds and other rebellious tribes to acts of violence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 61.

Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Mr. Marling.

May 31, 1908.

ACCORDING to repeated reports received from Urumia during the last few days, the Turkish frontier officials, who have intruded on Persian territory, which they now occupy, are continually inciting the Persian rebellious tribes and Kurds. Notwithstanding the recent assurances given by the Porte to the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople to the effect they would not encourage the rebellious Kurds, a few days ago the Turkish intruders incited them to acts of violence. Again, they are executing public works on territory incontestably Persian, such as the construction of a telegraph line in Lahijan, and a custom-house and outposts at other places.

A copy of the reports respecting the above facts is herewith inclosed. I request you to be so good as to bring the matter to the notice of your Government, with a view that the British Ambassador at Constantinople may be instructed to assist the Persian Representative in preventing the above and other unsatisfactory measures on the part of the Turkish frontier authorities.

Inclosure 2 in No. 61.

Telegraphic Reports from Miktashem-es-Sultaneh to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

(1.)

[Undated.]

THE Turkish intruders do not cease a moment from doing some mischief. They have sent from Oshin Mustafa, Khan of Zarzar, with some force to the villages near the lake, where he is obtaining the allegiance of the inhabitants. Some villages have already accepted his proposal. The object of the Turks is firstly to cut off Urumia from Soujboulak; secondly, to take possession of Shaitanabad and the villages in that neighbourhood; thirdly, to reconquer the districts of Dasht and . . .

(2.)

May 26, 1908.

Shaitanabad was besieged by the rebellious Kurds for four or five days. They were constantly reinforced by the Mamish, &c. Yesterday, the number of the besiegers having reached 600 men, the two sons of Agha Khan Mirpanj who were in the fort were obliged to surrender. The whole district of Dasht and . . . , which they tried last year to bring under their jurisdiction, is now occupied by them, and the roads between Urumia, Sulduz, and Soujboulak are entirely blocked. The inhabitants of the village of Karganrud have poured into the town. The village and even a mosque have been burnt down. Thirty people have been killed and their bodies thrown into the river. Seven women have been taken prisoners, and it is said that about 100 people are missing. I have no information as to what they have done to the village of Shaitanabad and other villages. I will report afterwards.

(3.)

[Undated.]

I have received your telegram regarding the assurances given by the Porte. The result of these assurances is what has been witnessed at Shaitanabad. . . . If you refer to a map, you will see the position of the village of Diza, which stands on the Urumia Lake. They have reached that place. They are constructing guard-houses and increasing their forces at Ganehin and Baradust. They have also sent forty soldiers to the village of Ashki so that they may come in force to the district of Sanji of Urumia for the purpose of collecting cattle taxes. They are building in the village of Kallor, about 6 miles from Margawar, a custom-house. Garrisons have been posted in each village in the Sulduz district, which is out of the disputed zone. They have stopped the water of Ronzalehai, which comes from Dasht.

[23134]

No. 62.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 159.)

Sir,

Tehran, June 17, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram No. 109 of the 10th instant on the subject of Messrs. Lynch's shed at Shellilieh. This case has been energetically taken up by the Legation in the last few months, and I venture to furnish you with a brief summary of the events which have led up to the present position of affairs.

On the 23rd November, 1907, the Persian Government addressed a note requesting me to restrain Messrs. Lynch from negotiating with Sheikh Murteza for the lease of a plot of ground on the river bank on which they wished to erect their shed; to inform them that the land was the property of Mouin-ut-Tajjar; and to cause any arrangement made to be submitted to the Persian Government for their approval. Mr. Malleson, the Tehran representative of the Persian Transport Company, whom I consulted, was under the impression that the shed had already been erected; this subsequently proved to be erroneous. He was also in possession of a signed declaration to the effect that the land in question was the rightful property of the lessor, and other documentary evidence had convinced both him and the agents at Ahwaz that such was indeed the case. It had also come to Mr. Malleson's knowledge that Mouin-ut-Tajjar had made an offer to the Shushter Seyyids for the purchase of the land in question. Basing my attitude upon these grounds, I accordingly addressed on the 28th December, 1907, a reply to the Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that I was unable to comply with the requests of the Persian Government, and asking them to see that Messrs. Lynch were not molested, as the right to conclude a lease with the owners of the land was fully secured to them by Article 4 of the Commercial Treaty of Turkmanchai; nor did I see any necessity for submitting such lease for the approval of the Persian Government.

On the 3rd February I received a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah forwarding copy of the lease which had been drafted. Mr. McDonall reported the receipt of an official communication from the Karguzar to the effect that he had received instructions from the Persian Foreign Office to forbid the negotiations between Messrs. Lynch and Sheikh Murteza, and that the latter's title to the land was doubtful. The Karguzar had written in a similar strain to Sheikh Murteza, and Mr. McDonall forwarded copy of his lengthy reply detailing the history of his ownership, protesting that such cases were not in the competence of the Foreign Office, but were referable to the religious Courts, and his readiness to rebut any counter-claim according to the Mahommedan law. I thereupon on the 8th February requested the Persian Government to cancel their instructions to the Karguzar, and telegraphed to Mr. McDonall that we would support Messrs. Lynch, and that he should telegraph if they were interfered with.

At this stage it transpired that the shed had not been built, and, at my instance, Mr. Malleson telegraphed to his principals urging the importance of immediate action and of issuing instructions to the Ahwaz Agency.

On the 1st March I received a reply to my note of the 28th December. The note contained a strong hint that it was not the business of the Legation to interfere in cases of disputed ownership, and reverted to the necessity for submitting arrangements to the Persian Government in order to avoid difficulties. I replied on the 30th March that it was the Legation's duty to investigate the title of a lessor to land which a British subject wished to lease, and renewed my request for the cancellation of the instructions sent to the Karguzar.

On the 5th April His Majesty's Vice-Consul telegraphed from Ahwaz that Messrs. Lynch's agent had been authorized from London to proceed with the shed, and that the details of the lease had been finally adjusted.

On the 27th April Captain Lorimer telegraphed that Mouin-ut-Tajjar's Shushter agent had used force to prevent the commencement of building operations. I at once instructed Captain Lorimer to press the Sheikh to intervene on Messrs. Lynch's behalf, and on the ground of their Treaty privileges. On the following day I addressed a note to the Persian Government protesting against the illegal action of the Mouin-ut-Tajjar's agent, and requesting the dispatch of instructions to the competent authorities to put a check on such proceedings. I have as yet received no reply to this communication. From subsequent telegraphic correspondence it transpired that several violent telegrams were sent by Nizam-es-Saltaneh denying the validity of Sheikh Murteza's claim, saying

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that that individual was to be threatened and suppressed, and that Mouin-ut-Tujjar was the rightful owner.

Meanwhile I approved a suggestion made by Captain Lorimer that Messrs. Lynch should be advised to carry on the work unless forcibly prevented. They did so; but on the 18th May I was informed that the building had been stopped as the Shushter Mustaufi had, under orders from Nizam-es-Saltaneh, threatened the workmen. The Sheikh of Mohammerah was unwilling to interfere as Shushter was not technically within his jurisdiction, and for various reasons he was most reluctant to embroil himself with either party. Various representations made by Mr. Churchill on my instructions to the Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs were unproductive of result. On the 14th May I deputed Mr. Churchill to be present at a meeting held between the Ministers of the Interior and Commerce, the Mouin's agent and several others, to examine the case of ownership in dispute. Mr. Churchill only held a watching brief, and reported that various documents, covered with seals, purporting to be the Mouin-ut-Tujjar's title-deeds were produced. As was to be expected Nizam-es-Saltaneh pronounced himself satisfied with the soundness of the Mouin's claim. Without a close examination of these papers it is of course impossible to pronounce upon their authenticity or validity.

Since that date, thanks to the kaleidoscopic changes in the Cabinet and the internal crisis which has brought Government and administration to a standstill, it has been impossible to pursue the matter further, but I shall not fail to employ the first opportunity that occurs for pressing Messrs. Lynch's case. It is to be hoped that the departure of Nizam-es-Saltaneh, who throughout displayed an unwarrantable and objectionable partiality for Mouin-ut-Tujjar, will diminish the difficulties in a case with which, in consequence of the nebulous nature of all land-ownership in Persia, and the elusive practices of the Mahomedan law, it is far from easy to deal. Messrs. Lynch may rest assured that every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory settlement of the question with as little delay as is possible in the circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

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No. 63.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 160.)

Sir,

Gulahek, June 18, 1908.

MR. CHURCHILL called, by my instructions, on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and, after informing his Highness of the contents of Mr. Wratistaw's telegram No. 36 of the 11th June, inquired what action the Persian Government intends to take in view of the disquieting news of the activity of the Kurds in the neighbourhood of Urmia. Ala-es-Sultaneh proved rather uncommunicative, but Mr. Churchill detected a very decided reluctance on his part to address the Governments of the two mediating Powers for their assistance. I myself had also had a similar impression at a short conversation on the proposal that Persia should send a special Commission to Constantinople to decide the basis on which the local Frontier Commission should negotiate; but, as his Highness had only just resumed office, I thought it probable that he did not wish to express any decided opinion till he had posted himself thoroughly on the subject.

The Russian Minister, to whom I mentioned this impression, said that he too had noticed something of the same kind, and he agreed with me that there was a danger that, unless some effective steps were taken at Constantinople to assist Persia to a just settlement of the question, the Persian Government might turn elsewhere for help. I fancy also that the Russian Minister felt as I did, that the very different attitudes which the two Legations have observed in the present internal crisis might produce the undesirable belief that the *entente* between Great Britain and Russia as regards Persian affairs is in reality hollow, and that energetic joint action in defence of Persia's interests would be valuable to counteract such an impression and to induce Persia to look to the two Powers as her protectors.

When I subsequently saw Ala-es-Sultaneh on the 16th instant, I asked him what news he had received from Urmia. His Highness read me two long telegrams from Mohtashem-es-Sultaneh describing the difficulty of his position owing to the aggressive tone of the Turkish authorities, and reproaching the Government with giving him so little support. "In the present distracted condition of the Government," said Ala-es-

Saltaneh, "we can of course do nothing. Do you think your Government will be willing to assist us?" I said that the position had seemed so serious that the Russian Minister and I had already urged that energetic steps should be taken at Constantinople, but I thought that an appeal from the Persian Government itself would add great weight to our argument. His Highness asked whether he should address the British and Russian Legations in Tehran, or instruct the Persian Representatives in London and St. Petersburg to make a communication. I said it was a matter of little moment, and I left his Highness in the belief that he would take action almost immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

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No. 64.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 161. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahek, June 18, 1908.

DESPITE the fact that Persia has been practically without Ministers, the general condition of the country has not been materially worse. The energy displayed by Zil-es-Sultan has reduced Shiraz to order, and that town and the Province of Fars generally appear to be perfectly tranquil. In Kermanshah, on the contrary, general lawlessness prevails, and in Sultanabad and the surrounding districts the carpet-weavers employed by Messrs. Ziegler are displaying a disquieting disposition to evade their contracts, and Bahram Mirza, the Governor, seems quite powerless to give Messrs. Ziegler's agents proper protection. Kerman, too, so I am informed by the Acting Superintendent of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, was recently for a day the scene of party fighting, but as His Majesty's Consul has not made any report on the subject I presume that nothing serious has occurred.

The presence of the "bastis" in the Indo-European Telegraph Department's office at Yezd for something like three weeks has given me considerable anxiety, for the fanatical crowd can work itself to such a pitch of frenzy that, as actually occurred at Yezd, two or three persons committed suicide, and a catastrophe might have occurred at any moment. It was, moreover, difficult for the Persian Government to give way, for the peasants were agitating for the abolition of a tax which has been regularly paid for the last eighty years—a wholly unjustifiable demand.

The Beliasver incident on the Russian frontier, which caused so much excitement and apprehension, was finally settled about the 16th instant, on which day the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that he had received a telegram from the Governor of Tabreez reporting that the last of the Russian demands, *i.e.*, for the surrender of the men implicated in the killing of Captain Dvoeglasof has been fulfilled, and in the interest which the struggle in progress at Tehran has aroused, the episode seems to be for the moment eclipsed. I understand, however, that the Persian Government are preparing a counter-claim against Russia for the damage done by the Cossacks in the vicinity of Beliasver.

Although the Shah, by closing the Tehran telegraph offices, has done his best to prevent news of what is going on here from getting abroad, he has only partially succeeded, and events at the capital are being closely watched from the provinces. A good deal of excitement has been aroused, and telegrams have been received from most of the larger towns promising armed support to the popular party. It is, however, very difficult to say exactly what value must be attached to these messages, or how far they represent public opinion. For my own part, I doubt much whether more than four towns, *e.g.*, Resht, Kazvin, Tabreez, and Isfahan, would really send a contingent, unless indeed the Shah committed the extreme folly of actually attacking the Medjlis itself, and it is probable that many of the telegrams that have so greatly impressed the Shah have been dispatched by hairbrained "patriots" calling themselves the local Anjumen. I do not mean to imply that there is no danger to the Shah in this; it is a question of proportion, for if those who clamour for the Shah's deposition are few in number, those who would voluntarily lift a finger to save him are fewer still. The mass of the population are, I think, really indifferent, and only desire to see a Government formed that would afford reasonable security, but if they should be persuaded that under the present Shah such Government were impossible they might easily be roused to join in the outcry for his removal. In the capital, however, it is different. There is in Tehran a considerable number of men who expect they know not what benefits from the Constitution, and who

are firmly convinced that under Mohammed Ali their hopes can never be realized. These men, ignorant as they are, are sincere enough, and among them are found the leaders of the more important Anjumens. And it is the Anjumens who dominate the situation; the larger are honest enough, but very many of the smaller ones have been formed simply to forward their own private interests. Unfortunately, all the Anjumens suffer from the vice of meddlesomeness, and as their interference is usually accompanied by threats—which, it is true, a little courage would enable their victims to disregard—Government has become practically impossible. But Persian Ministers, at least those who have been in office in the last eight months, have, to their country's misfortune, lacked even the small dose of courage necessary, with the result that the arrogance of the Anjumens has been encouraged to such a point that they have practically usurped the representative character of the Medjliss. In fact, Persia was fast drifting into a state of Government by the semi-secret and wholly irresponsible political Societies of Tehran. It is not that the influence of the Anjumens is wholly bad; on the contrary, they have been, and still are, the one support of the Parliament against the reactionaries, but having realized their power they have too often abused it; sometimes, but not often in important matters, wittingly, but most frequently out of sheer ignorance. But the Anjumens are in reality as timid as the Ministers and Assembly whom they overawe. Recent events, however, seem to show that resolute action would soon bring them to reason. It is inconceivable that a man of so weak and irresolute a character as the Shah should have maintained the externally uncompromising attitude which he has shown throughout the existing crisis unless he had been assisted by Russian advice and support. I must admit that except that M. de Hartwig has mentioned once or twice that the Shah has asked him to send some one to the Palace, I have no fact to adduce in support of my belief that the Shah's Russian friends are behind these manifestations of energy, but to my mind it is morally certain that for the last fortnight the Shah has placed himself entirely in Russian hands. At the moment of writing it appears certain that the Shah will emerge triumphant from the present struggle, but it must be borne in mind that his probable success is in the first place due to the universal belief that Russia, or, perhaps, even Russia and Great Britain, are engaged to maintain Mohammed Ali Shah on the throne. M. de Hartwig has unquestionably traded, or, I might almost say, gambled, on this belief, for I am convinced that should he at any moment be obliged to admit that his Government will not interfere by force of arms on the Shah's behalf, the Shah's position, unless His Majesty has in the meantime managed to conciliate public opinion towards himself, will be exceedingly precarious.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

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No. 65.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 162.)
Sir,

Tehran, June 19, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 130 of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to report that, in consequence of the various Cabinet crises which have taken place of late, the Imperial Bank of Persia found it impossible for some time to make any progress with the negotiation for the substitution of the revenues of the Bushire Custom-house for those of Kermanshah, which they have hitherto been permitted to encash for the service of their advances to the Persian Government.

There is undoubtedly also some opposition on the part of the Minister of Finance, who fears that if the arrangement is once carried into effect and the Kermanshah revenues are consequently paid into the Russian Bank, he may look on the whole of those revenues as lost to the Persian Government.

The Persian Government has, however, within the last ten days approached the Imperial Bank of Persia for a loan of 100,000 tomans (20,000*l.*), to be repaid by twelve equal monthly instalments from the customs, and, at my suggestion, Mr. Hawkins is making it one of the conditions of the advance that the Finance Department shall give an undertaking that the Bushire revenues shall be paid into the bank for the service of all its advances. Sanjed-Dowleh is apparently unwilling to agree to this condition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING

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No. 66.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 163.)
Sir,

Gulack, June 19, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia for the last four weeks.

I have, &c.
(For the Chargé d'Affaires)
(Signed) ERNEST F. GYE.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Monthly Summary.—No. 6.

Tehran.

THE events which have occurred in Tehran during the past four weeks are fully described in Mr. Marling's despatch No. 146 of the 15th June. The following is a chronological account of the principal incidents:—

May 30.—Mushir-ed-Dowleh resigned Foreign Ministry.

May 30 to June 2.—Demonstration at Azad-ul-Mulk's urging expulsion of courtiers, especially Amir Behadur and Chapchal.

June 2.—Shah agrees to expulsion of six courtiers, including the above.

June 3.—Amir Behadur takes refuge at Russian Legation.

British and Russian Representatives call together on Mushir-ed-Dowleh and Azad-ul-Mulk and urge gravity of situation.

June 4.—Shah leaves Palace for Bagh Shah, accompanied by Colonel Liakhoff and Chapchal. Much excitement in Tehran. Telegraph Company's lines are cut.

June 6.—Amir Behadur goes to Bagh Shah secretly.

June 7.—Amir Behadur leaves Russian Legation definitely for Bagh Shah.

Shah arrests treacherously Jehad-ed-Dowleh, Aked-Dowleh, and Serdar Mansur.

New Cabinet is presented to Assembly.

June 8.—Shah issues Proclamation. Town quiet.

June 9.—Prisoners exiled to Mazandaran.

June 10.—Telegrams pour in from provinces promising support to popular side.

June 11.—Anjumens collect in great numbers at Mosque.

June 12.—Shah sends ultimatum to Anjumens, who are advised by the Assembly leaders to comply, and they do so.

June 16.—Assembly draw up strongly-worded manifesto and present it to the Shah.

June 17.—Telegrams received by Legation from provinces.

The New Cabinet, presented to the House on the 7th June, is composed as follows:—

Minister of Interior and President	Mushir-es-Sultaneh (347).
" Finance	Sanjed-Dowleh (476).
" Foreign Affairs	Ak-es-Sultaneh (21).
" Justice	Mohdashed-es-Sultaneh (271).
" War	Mustaffi-ul-Mamalek (358).
" Education	Mushir-ed-Dowleh (345).
" Commerce and Public Works	Moumin-ul-Mulk (367).

On the arrest of Serdar Mansur (K.C.M.G.) on the 7th June, who was Administrator-General of Post and Telegraphs, the Telegraph Administration was conferred, by the Shah's order, upon Mukher-ed-Dowleh (312). Serdar Mansur, it should be remembered, was managing the Telegraphs on behalf of Siyahdar (Nasr-es-Sultaneh, 463), who is still at Astrabad in command of troops. Mukher-ed-Dowleh is said to have paid the Shah about 30,000 tomans for the post.

Jehad-ed-Dowleh, Aked-Dowleh, and Serdar Mansur, are now detained at Savad Kul, about 100 miles east of Tehran.

M. Raymond Lecomte, the new French Minister, has arrived at Tehran.

Herr Kurt Jung, the German Commercial Delegate, has also arrived at Tehran.

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Mr. A. O. Wood has been appointed Chief Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia to succeed Mr. J. Rabino.

Mr. Passelt, ex-Russian Consul-General at Bushire, is reported to have been appointed Russian Consul-General at Tehran under a new arrangement by which the Legation and Consulate-General will be entirely separate.

The Tehran press is displaying a tone of considerable dejection in consequence of the Shah's determined action, which is supposed by the general public to have the support of both the Russian and British Legations. The Shah's unpopularity has greatly increased, as it is thought that his object is to overthrow the "Constitution."

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,
Oriental Secretary.

Tabreez.

1. M. Miller, from St. Petersburg, has been appointed to act for Mr. Teherkasov as Vice-Consul at Urmia. Colonel Dumanski, a Staff Officer from Tiflis, formerly Military Vice-Consul at Van, has been appointed "Secretary" to the Russian Vice-Consulate at Urmia. The Russian Vice-Consul and Colonel Dumanski started on the 27th May on a journey along the frontier by order of the Russian Government.

2. Rumours of disturbances at Tehran caused some excitement at Tabreez about the 9th June, and the Governor-General asked His Majesty's Vice-Consul for authentic news. The town remained quiet.

Resht.

Mr. Rabino reports that in a conversation he had with M. Wolff, Russian Vice-Consul at Astrabad, and M. Minorsky of the Russian Legation, these gentlemen expressed satisfaction at a report they said they had received that our Consulate-General at Tabreez had been reduced to a Vice-Consulate. They hoped the Consulate-General at Meshed would be similarly reduced.

Meshed.

1. It is reported that the Afghan Governor of Chelcheldokhteran recently entertained a large party of Russian officers.

2. M. de Klemme has been appointed Chief of the Central Asian Section of the Russian Foreign Office. Prince Dubija from Isfahan is appointed Russian Consul-General at Meshed.

3. The Shah's birthday was, generally speaking, ignored at Meshed.

4. M. de Giers wrote about the 27th May a strong note to the Karguzar to the effect that if order were not speedily restored in Daragez the Russian Government would make their own arrangements.

Tuchut-i-Haydari.

1. Captain Watson, I.M.S., arrived on the 3rd May from England.

2. Five Turkish deserters from Yemen arrived early in May from Quetta.

3. A party of fifteen Hazaras, most of whom have served in the Indian army, passed through on their way to settle in or near Meshed. Two similar parties have passed through in the last two months.

4. Karez reported in the beginning of May that for some weeks no caravans had passed from Herat to Meshed.

5. On the 13th May four Russian Cossacks arrived from Seistan on their way to Russia via Karez.

6. Adil-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor, arrived on the 18th May.

7. Captain Lyass informed Captain Keyes that Lieutenant-Colonel Baron von der Flaas has been appointed Military Attaché in Seistan. He was "officer for special commissions" on the staff of the General Commanding in Turkestan, and was detailed to look after Captains Keyes and Watson during their visit to Turkestan in 1904.

Isfahan.

1. On the 17th May representatives of various political clubs took refuge at the meeting place of the local Assembly in order to obtain reforms in the election of that body, security of the highways, punishment of those who spoke against the Constitution,

the establishment of a Court of Justice, and the abolition of the custom of taking sanctuary at mosques and priests' houses. The Governor and local Assembly after some discussion agreed to these requests, and on the 22nd May the refugees left the Assembly building. The agitation was aimed at Agha Nejefi who is a reactionary, and his agreement with the above reforms was obtained in writing.

2. Mr. Grahame, His Majesty's Consul-General, left on four months' leave on the 24th May.

3. On the 28th May, 500 villagers from Behman, near Isfahan, took refuge in the British Consulate, complaining of excessive taxation. Agha Nejefi persuaded them to leave the Consulate, but encouraged them to refuse to pay as long as the Governor threatened to send artillery to their villages.

4. The Isfahan post was robbed near Tarq on the 19th May. 400 sheep were carried off on the 1st June from near Kumesheh.

Yezd.

On the 22nd May the villagers (referred to in paragraph 3 of last month's summary) returned to the telegraph office demanding sanctuary. On the 26th May two of them had thrown petroleum over and set themselves on fire, and three had thrown themselves from a minaret, one being killed. A telegram from the Finance Minister offering partial remission of taxation was rejected. On the 24th May, no reply having come from the Assembly, the crowd broke into the telegraph office. On the 26th May the President of the Assembly telegraphed to the whole of the priests at Yezd upbraiding them for allowing an appeal to foreigners, and instructing them to get the crowd away from the office. The crowd, however, remained. On the 29th May some of the crowd left, but the leaders and the majority remained. On the 30th May more villagers came in and three tents were pitched. On the 3rd June a section of the crowd wished to detain the Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia, whom they met in the street, as a hostage, but were dissuaded. A message from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that the Ministers were taking action was received in silence, the crowd demanding a reply from the Assembly. On the 4th June a message from the Chargé d'Affaires that the Assembly had decided not to collect the tax calmed the crowd. On the 6th June the crowd was only with difficulty persuaded by its leaders to allow the telegraph office to be opened, and the Parsees were compelled to join the agitation, which continued unabated. The Governor was powerless, but wished to seize certain of the agitators who had closed the shops which he had ordered to be opened. As these men were in the telegraph office Mr. Blackman persuaded him not to make the attempt as bloodshed was likely to occur. The Imperial Bank remained closed, as its opening was likely to cause trouble. On the 10th June telegrams from the President of the Assembly and the Finance Minister were received ordering the collection of taxes to be held in abeyance until the arrival of a Commission of Inquiry. The leader of the crowd sent his thanks to the Chargé d'Affaires. The next day the crowd diminished, but there being some doubt of the authenticity of the telegrams received, some remained. On the 12th June the leader still remained in the office though all the crowd had left.

Seistan.

Major Kennion left Seistan on the 4th May for Birjand.

Shiraz.

1. The remainder of the Chaharmahal Regiment, the Jelidish Regiment, and two mountain guns arrived during the first week in May.

2. The Governor-General has conferred a robe of honour on Sowlet-ed-Dowleh, the Chief of the Kashgai.

3. A number of towers, built during the late disturbances, have been destroyed, and strict orders issued for the arrest of any one firing a rifle.

4. On the Shah's birthday His Majesty's Acting Consul called on the Governor-General, who assured him of his intention to pay special attention to British claims. He has not, however, so far acted in accordance with this assurance.

5. On the 23rd May the two sons of the late Kavan-ul-Mulk left Shiraz for Europe via Bushire. Next day two notable leaders of roughs belonging to the Kavani faction were executed for complicity in the murder of some priests on the occasion of the late Kavan's funeral.

Kerman.

1. M. Petroff, Secretary to the Russian Consul, recently left for Tehran at three days' notice. Major Ducat thinks that this was due to his not getting on well with the Consul.

2. The people are getting tired of continual unrest, and have decided to discard their revolvers and other arms. The Governor recently telegraphed his resignation to Tehran. It is thought he did this knowing it would not be accepted, in the hope of being given a free hand to deal with the situation.

3. In compliance with orders from Tehran, there was no official celebration of the Shah's birthday.

Kermanshah.

1. The whole district of Kermanshah was throughout May in a very disturbed condition, owing to the tribes who were occupied with either robbing travellers or fighting among themselves. The Zafar-es-Sultaneh, the new Governor had not arrived, and the town remained in disorder. Trade was at a standstill.

2. The two officers sent from India to buy mules arrived on the 6th June.

*Persian Gulf.**Bushire.*

1. The intrigue in connection with the caravan routes to the interior has apparently come to an end, all the principal native and foreign merchants having signed a paper agreeing not to use the Shif route, but to send and receive goods by the Mashhad Ahmed route. This arrangement is to hold good for one year. The Darya Beggi informed the Resident that he personally supported the Ahmed route, but under instructions from the Minister of the Interior the settlement of the question rested entirely with the merchants. Under the circumstances, therefore, the merchants having come to an arrangement, official interference is improbable, and the question has, it may be hoped, been settled.

2. The Karguzar of Mohammedali and the Mishkan-i-Nizam arrived early in May to hold an inquiry into the case of the Armenian Petros, and also into the German Consul's complaint against the local Karguzar of discourtesy in connection with the same affair. The Karguzar, it is reported, was asked from Tehran to apologize to the German Consul, but declined to do so, saying the charge was unfounded. Hence the inquiry.

3. Sefer Ali Khan, Deputy Governor of Lingah, whose recall was demanded by the Resident on account of his oppressive and irregular conduct towards Bahreinis and others, arrived at Bushire on the 14th May.

Bander Abbas.

M. Wagner, who has been appointed First Provincial Director of Customs at Bander Abbas, arrived on the 3rd May.

Lingah.

1. Mirza Abdullah Khan Sertif, the Russian Consular Agent, left on the 12th April for Bander Abbas. He was replaced by Sadid-es-Sultaneh, whose place he has filled at Bander Abbas.

2. In April, Mohammed Abdullah Khajeh, the *soi-disant* Turkish Consular Agent, and the *Kavazi* community sent telegrams to the Persian Prime Minister, the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran, and the Sublime Porte, protesting against the removal by the Governor of the Gulf Ports of the flagstaff which Mohammed Abdullah Khajeh had erected on the roof of his house, and on which he was flying the Turkish flag.

Mohammerah.

The Sherkh has refused to continue in charge of the Shuster and Dizful districts unless the expenses are paid by the Governor-General.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major.

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No. 67.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 296.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, June 29, 1908.

I HAD the honour to transmit to you in my despatch No. 285 of the 22nd instant a précis of a leading article on Persian affairs published by the "*Novoe Vremya*," about the time when M. Isvolsky had proposed that the Representatives of the two Powers should address a joint warning to the Zil-es-Sultan calculated to discourage him from aiming at the throne. The "*Novoe Vremya*" strongly deprecated any interference on the part of Russia in the internal affairs of Persia, and recommended a policy of observation and neutrality; and the more liberal Russian press, as I had the honour to mention in my despatch above referred to, also published articles strongly advocating a policy of non-interference.

As M. Isvolsky, in the course of our conversation, always laid great stress on the feeling of resentment that would be aroused here should the Zil-es-Sultan achieve his ends, an eventuality which he said would be interpreted as a triumph of British over Russian influence, and as his Excellency seemed, on the other hand, to attach comparatively little importance to the objections which might be felt in Russia to anything that looked like interference in Persia's internal affairs, I called his attention to the very satisfactory attitude of the "*Novoe Vremya*." His Excellency replied that he had endeavoured to influence the views of that paper in regard to the Persian question, though the article to which I alluded was not actually inspired. He then showed me a number of the "*Golos Pravdy*," a Moscow Octobrist paper of no great importance, lying on his desk, in which the suggestion was thrown out that England stood behind the Zil-es-Sultan, and he said that that was the kind of comment of which he was afraid.

M. Isvolsky appears to me quite sincere in expressing apprehensions of criticisms that might be passed here should Great Britain give any pretext for supposing that she had lent her support to the Shah's uncle. At the same time I think that tendency to excessive sensitiveness of this kind in regard to English policy in Persia is confined to a narrow, though no doubt influential, section of military and official opinion. Educated public opinion here in general is concerned mainly with avoiding entanglement in the Persian troubles, such as might lead to unforeseen and undesired consequences. It shows no signs of suspicion in regard to British policy, and it will, I believe, remain quite satisfied so long as the two Powers seem to be working together in Persia, and avoid the appearance of unnecessary interference in the affairs of the country. There are already signs that the prominent part played in recent events by the Russian officer commanding the Cossack Brigade is much disliked here in liberal circles, as seeming to throw on Russia the responsibility for the *coup* carried out by the Shah.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

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No. 68.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 299. Confidential.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 28, 1908.

THE following is a brief account of what has passed up to to-day between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and myself in regard to the two principal questions which we have discussed in connection with the Persian crisis: that of refugees at the British Legation, and that of the stationing of troops round the Legation to prevent persons taking refuge there:

On the 25th instant M. Isvolsky informed me of a telegram which he had received from M. de Hartwig, stating that a "crowd" of refugees had taken "bust" at the Legation. M. de Hartwig reported it as the general opinion that the revolutionaries had been instigated to this course by Mr. Churchill, who had been in constant touch with the Enjumeus. M. Isvolsky, speaking in the friendliest way possible, expressed the view that this occurrence would produce the very unfortunate impression that the two Legations were working one against the other. I said that Mr. Marling had reported

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that the Military Attaché remained in the Legation with special instructions to prevent what had occurred, but that some refugees had entered notwithstanding these orders. The standing instructions given to the Legation by His Majesty's Government were strictly against allowing "bast" to be taken. I believed, however, that it was sometimes in practice impossible to prevent it.

On the following day, the 26th instant, having received the instructions contained in your telegram No. 183, I explained more fully to M. Isvolsky the attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to the question of asylum; saying that Mr. Marling had been instructed to discourage more persons from seeking refuge in the Legation, but that asylum could not be refused when life was in imminent danger, and that the refugees in the Legation could not be surrendered without adequate guarantees. I also spoke to his Excellency in the terms of your instructions regarding the action of the Shah in surrounding the Legation with troops, and I asked him to send directions at once to M. de Hartwig to support the representations which Mr. Marling was to make on this subject. His Excellency promised to do so, and the desired instructions were sent to M. de Hartwig that afternoon.

On the 27th instant the Minister of Foreign Affairs again alluded to the "bast" question, speaking as before in the most friendly manner. He prefaced his remarks by saying that he was not making a "complaint," and he asked me not to telegraph what he said for fear of giving it too much importance. Still he was plainly most anxious that I should report his observations to you. He said that the staffs of the two missions in Tehran were not working together. It was reported to him (from other sources besides the Russian Minister) that in the matter of allowing "bast" to be taken, Major Stokes had not carried out Mr. Marling's instructions. Persons who were not in the least in danger of their lives were encouraged to come to the Legation. It was generally said in Tehran that some of the Legation gholams, who belonged to the Eujumens, openly invited people to take asylum. I said, of course, that stories of this kind were sure to be put about in a place like Tehran. When I pressed his Excellency as to his information, he said fraudulently that these were reports of what was being generally said in the town, and that they lacked confirmation. However, it is plain that he believes them himself. I asked what conceivable object Major Stokes could have in admitting refugees if he could help it. He replied, simply to work in the opposite direction from the Russian Legation. He referred once more to Mr. Churchill as working against the Russian Legation in various ways. He then went on to say that he had shown his earnest desire to co-operate with His Majesty's Government in Persia by agreeing to all the different proposals recently made to him, as to a joint warning to the Shah, as to the publicity to be given to it, as to supporting Mr. Marling's representations in the matter of the troops round the Legation. But no co-operation was practicable so long as the staffs of the Legations worked against the wishes of the two Governments.

I am convinced, from the different conversations which I have had with his Excellency, that he is most sincerely anxious that the two Governments should co-operate in Persia, and he does not strike me as being excessively suspicious of the action of the British Legation. But he has evidently received the most positive statements on this subject not only from the Russian Minister but also from such sources as the Russian Financial Agent and the Russian Telegraph Agency, and it is difficult for him to disbelieve them altogether.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BRIENE.

[23182]

No. 69.

Mr. O'Brien to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 300.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, June 30, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 299 of the 28th instant, I have the honour to state that on the receipt of your telegram No. 190 yesterday morning I asked for an interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but found that his Excellency had left for Peterhof, where he had an audience with the Emperor. I therefore could not see him until late in the afternoon. Meanwhile, I had been shown at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs a telegram marked secret from M. de Hartwig stating that he had officially supported Mr. Marling's request for the withdrawal of the Cossacks from around the Legation, that he had also privately urged this course on the Shah, and that he had asked the Russian Commander to exercise "the greatest care" with

regard to the Legation. M. de Hartwig added that all the Cossacks had been withdrawn with the exception of a single post or piquet, such as was usually placed for the protection of the foreign Legations, and that Mr. Marling was satisfied. I inclose copy of an *aide-memoire* sent to me afterwards from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs giving the substance of this telegram.

During the day I also received a copy of Mr. Marling's telegram No. 173, from which, taken in conjunction with M. de Hartwig's report, I concluded that the offensive proceedings of the Cossacks had in fact been stopped. In view of this, and of M. de Hartwig's having taken the action which His Majesty's Government desired, I did not of course make the whole of the communication indicated in your telegram No. 190 when I saw the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the evening. I told his Excellency that, although the Cossacks had been withdrawn, I thought His Majesty's Government would not yet consider the incident as closed, but that they would probably exact satisfaction, and I expected that you would send me further instructions. In the meantime, I communicated to him a Memorandum, copy of which is inclosed, recapitulating the facts connected with the incident, as stated by Mr. Marling in his telegrams from the 28th instant up to yesterday, and a second Memorandum, of which I also have the honour to inclose a copy, stating fully the view which His Majesty's Government take of the matter, and repeating the assurances previously given by you with regard to the policy of His Majesty's Government in Persia. I read these two Memoranda over to his Excellency and I explained verbally the indignity to His Majesty's Legation involved by the proceedings of the Russian Commander, pointing out that an Asiatic Power had gone so far as to use force to impede the free action of the Legation. I also called his Excellency's attention to the fact that the Russian Minister did not seem to realize the situation. I said it struck me as astonishing that, at a moment when the British Legation was actually being molested by Cossacks, M. de Hartwig should be reproaching Mr. Marling with allowing bast.

In reply, M. Isvolsky pointed out that he had complied with your request as to sending instructions to M. de Hartwig, and that M. de Hartwig had taken the action which you wished. For this I thanked his Excellency. He said also that M. de Hartwig reported that Mr. Marling's account of the action of the Cossack Brigade was greatly exaggerated. Patrols round the Legation were a very different thing from the Legation being "invested." Unfortunately, his Excellency went on, there was great ill-feeling between the two Representatives which led them both to magnify things. He did not conceal from me that he severely blamed M. de Hartwig for much that had occurred, but he maintained that there were equal faults on both sides. He reverted to the accusations against certain members of the staff of His Majesty's Legation of intriguing against the Shah and on behalf of the Popular party. He evidently believed that certain gholams had openly invited people to take bast in the Legation.

I need not report in detail the terms in which I disputed these various contentions. I think I succeeded in making somewhat clearer to his Excellency the nature of the indignity inflicted on the Legation, which M. de Hartwig had done his best to minimize. On the other hand, when I denied the truth of the allegations of intrigues by certain members of the staff, I was conscious that M. Isvolsky could not bring himself entirely to disbelieve them. He said that His Majesty's Government did not know of these proceedings and very likely Mr. Marling did not know of them, but they took place nevertheless. He has, evidently, received positive and circumstantial reports on the subject, not only from M. de Hartwig, but also from other sources as mentioned in my despatch No. 299; and though these reports lack all confirmation, he believes that they have some foundation. He said more than once that the action of certain subordinates of the British Legation was fatal to co-operation between the two Missions.

Throughout our discussion M. Isvolsky showed the most earnest anxiety to maintain the co-operation of the two Governments in Persia. He concluded by saying it would be a scandal, and not to be contemplated, that the proceedings of local Agents should disturb the policy of the two Cabinets. As I left him he said that he would telegraph the same night to the Russian Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BRIENE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 69.

M. Nératow to Mr. O'Beirne.

(Confidentielle.)

M. le Chargé d'Affaires,

Saint-Petersbourg, le 17 Juin, 1908.

PARTANT pour Peterhof, M. le Ministre m'a chargé de vous faire connaître le contenu d'un télégramme que nous venons de recevoir de M. de Hartwig. Il paraît qu'immédiatement après avoir appris que le Schah avait fait poser des piquets aux environs de la Légation d'Angleterre, notre Ministre s'est joint aux protestations de Mr. Marling, et qu'il a fait en outre parvenir au Schah le conseil de rappeler ces piquets. Ces derniers ont été enlevés de suite, à l'exception d'un seul, qui fait sentinelle auprès de la Légation, ainsi que c'est l'usage à Téhéran pour toutes les Légations étrangères.

M. de Hartwig ajoute que le Chargé d'Affaires d'Angleterre s'est déclaré complètement satisfait de ce résultat.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) A. NÉRATOW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 69.

Aide-mémoire by Mr. O'Beirne.

HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran telegraphed on the 15th (28th) June that two parties of Cossacks of fourteen men each were patrolling the road round His Majesty's Legation that morning, and that about ten policemen were posted to watch the gates. Later on the same day Mr. Marling reported that the situation was becoming intolerable. Neither the Russian Minister nor the Russian Governor-General of Tehran believed in the good faith of His Majesty's Legation, and the Governor-General, by surrounding the building with Cossacks, humiliated His Majesty's Representative in the eyes of the Persians and other foreigners in Tehran, and by his violent and reckless action had only served to increase the general alarm of the populace. The quiet condition of the town and the apparent reaction in favour of the Shah were due, in Mr. Marling's opinion, to sheer terror, for no faith could be placed in the Shah's declaration of a general amnesty. It had therefore been impossible to absolutely refuse admittance to all refugees, and equally impossible to force them to leave owing to the danger of their being arrested by the Cossacks. This happened, indeed, two or three times to persons who were refused admittance, and in the afternoon of the 15th (28th) June the clock-keeper of His Majesty's Legation was arrested as he left the main gate.

Early on the morning of the 16th (29th) June no Cossacks were visible near the Legation, but eight armed gendarmes were patrolling in the neighbourhood, and by 10 A.M. their number had increased and six Cossacks had reappeared. Another person coming to the Legation that morning was arrested. By the afternoon the Legation was "practically besieged" by Cossacks, some of whom even climbed into the surrounding trees to observe what was going on in the garden.

Mr. Marling reports also on the 15th (28th) June that he had a very frank conversation with M. de Hartwig. The latter expressed his conviction that the members of His Majesty's Legation were not acting in accordance with their avowed policy; that the gholams invited and brought people to take bast in the Legation; that the Military Attaché admitted them for political reasons; that Mr. Churchill, the Oriental Secretary, had invited a Deputy by letter to take bast; and that Abbas Kuli Khan, the Assistant Oriental Secretary, had made speeches in the Enjumeens. Mr. Marling assured M. de Hartwig that these stories were untrue. The latter then pressed Mr. Marling to expel from the Legation a large proportion of the bastis, who, he said, had now no reason whatever to fear for their lives, and of whom many had never been menaced. Their continued presence at the Legation constituted a rallying-point for the revolutionaries. Mr. Marling repeated that at the time they took refuge they were in fear for their lives, that their terror was genuine, and that he could not turn them out forcibly without instructions from His Majesty's Government.

The conversation then turned on the subject of the troops posted round the Legation, and Mr. Marling pointed out that such a measure, taken by the orders of the Russian Colonel, would produce a much worse impression as to the reality of the

Anglo-Russian Accord in Persia than would the presence of a few bastis at His Majesty's Legation. This the Russian Minister denied, and he even appeared inclined to justify the measure.

On the 16th (29th) June Mr. Marling sent the Oriental Secretary of the Legation to call the serious attention of the Shah to the situation. He stated that the action of the Legation in the question of bast had been purely humanitarian, and was due to no political motives whatever, and, acting on instructions; he stated that His Majesty's Government strongly resented the Shah's action, and would at once take steps to exact reparation for the indignity offered unless the troops were immediately withdrawn. Mr. Marling repeated the same language to the Private Secretary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who came to see him. The Shah would give no definite promise that the troops would be withdrawn, and the reply of the Minister of Foreign Affairs was equally unsatisfactory, and contained no apology.

On the 16th (29th) June Mr. Marling reported that the Cossack patrols were so arranged and stationed as to exercise a constant and effective watch over the Legation, while police were stationed under the walls to give notice of any one leaving or entering.

Inclosure 3 in No. 69.

Aide-mémoire by Mr. O'Beirne.

LES rapports télégraphiques reçus de Mr. Marling ont causé le plus profond souci au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté. Les affronts réitérés infligés à la Légation d'Angleterre par le Colonel Russe commandant la Brigade Cosaque tendent à produire une situation intolérable. Pendant cinq jours la Légation a été, pour ainsi dire, investie par des troupes sous le commandement d'officiers Russes. Des sujets Britanniques, des domestiques de la Légation en uniforme, un sowar et un gholam, tous deux en uniforme et chargés de valises diplomatiques, ont été forcés de s'arrêter à quelques mètres de la Légation. Des personnes parfaitement innocentes ont été faites prisonnières à quelques pas de la Légation. En résumé, la Brigade Cosaque a montré un manque absolu de respect pour la Légation d'Angleterre.

Les agissements violents du Commandant Russe ajoutent à la frayeur générale qui règne à Téhéran et poussent le peuple encore davantage à chercher refuge dans les Légations. Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté a difficulté à croire que cet officier passerait outre à des instructions envoyées au Ministre de Russie. En tout cas, une situation très sérieuse se présentera si des mesures ne sont pas prises pour refréindre immédiatement ces agissements à l'égard de la Légation Britannique.

Sir Edward Grey désire renouveler les assurances qu'il a déjà données à M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté pendant toute la crise actuelle a été fermement résolu à ne pas intervenir, et à ne rechercher pour lui-même aucun avantage politique, ni par l'emploi qui a été fait de la coutume Persane de "bast," ni par aucun autre moyen. Il est convaincu que cette politique a été suivie avec une parfaite loyauté par le Chargé d'Affaires d'Angleterre ainsi que le personnel de la Légation. D'un autre côté, il serait indispensable, afin de donner effet aux relations amicales existantes entre les deux Gouvernements que les Agents de la Russie à Téhéran observent une attitude amicale et bien disposée envers la Légation Britannique.

Saint-Petersbourg, le 17 (30) Juin, 1908.

[23183]

No. 70.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey. (Received July 6.)

(No. 391.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 2, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 300 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to state that I had a satisfactory interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday regarding affairs at Tehran.

His Excellency read over and handed to me an *aide-mémoire*, copy of which is inclosed herewith, stating that if the proceedings of the Persian Cossack Brigade, of which the British Legation complains, were taken by order of the Russian Colonel, this occurred independently of the Imperial Government and the Russian Legation. The

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aide-mémoire further states that immediately upon my asking for the co-operation of the Imperial Government in the matter instructions were telegraphed to the Russian Minister to give the strongest support to Mr. Marling's representations. The Russian Government, it proceeds to say, thanks you for your assurances in regard to the policy followed by His Majesty's Government in the Persian crisis, and do not for an instant doubt but that the British Agents in Persia carry out this policy with perfect loyalty. For their part, the Russian Government declare that they remain faithful to the *entente* between the two Governments respecting Persia, and to the non-intervention in Persia's internal affairs. Renewed instructions have been sent to M. de Hartwig enjoining on Russian Agents at Tehran to observe the most friendly attitude towards the British Legation, and the Russian Government firmly hope that the present incident will in no way affect the joint action of Russia and Great Britain in Persia.

I thanked his Excellency for this communication, which, I said, would, I was sure, be received with great gratification by His Majesty's Government. In the course of our conversation his Excellency somewhat amplified the statements contained in the *aide-mémoire*. He said that the instructions sent to M. de Hartwig were of the most stringent and categorical nature, and that they pointed out to him that the question of bast at the British Legation (on which he had laid so much stress) was after all of secondary importance. M. Isvolsky explained that the *aide-mémoire* referred to it as uncertain whether Colonel Liakhoff had given the orders complained of, because the Colonel's standing instructions from the Russian Government precluded him from commanding the Cossack Brigade when taking military action, and therefore it seemed doubtful whether the Colonel was responsible for what had occurred. I told him that Mr. Marling's reports were quite positive on the point. M. Isvolsky laid great stress on the fact that Colonel Liakhoff was an officer in the Persian service, and could not be controlled by M. de Hartwig, and that whatever he had done was not done by M. de Hartwig's orders. I expressed my conviction that M. de Hartwig, had he wished, could have stopped the Colonel's proceedings at the outset.

M. Isvolsky explained that his chief present anxiety was that he saw that relations were extremely strained between the two Legations, and that he did not clearly see how to make them really friendly. By the instructions which he had sent to M. de Hartwig he hoped to have done something towards that end.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE

Inclosure in No. 70.

Aide-Mémoire communicated by M. Isvolsky to Mr. O'Beirne.

EN réponse à l'aide-mémoire de l'Ambassade d'Angleterre en date du 17 (30) Juin courant, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères se fait un devoir d'assurer le Gouvernement Britannique que si les mesures de la Brigade de Cosaques Persans, dont la Légation d'Angleterre a à se plaindre, ont été prises par ordre du Colonel Russe, en sa qualité de Commandant de la dite brigade, cela a été fait indépendamment soit du Gouvernement Impérial, soit de la Légation de Russie à Téhéran. Aussitôt que Mr. O'Beirne eut demandé notre concours dans cette affaire, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères s'est empressé de télégraphier au Ministre de Russie à Téhéran l'ordre d'appuyer, de la manière la plus énergique, la demande du Chargé d'Affaires Britanniques, en vue d'obtenir le retrait des troupes Persanes des environs de la Légation Britannique. Un télégramme de M. de Hartwig daté du 16 Juin nous informe qu'il s'est immédiatement conformé à cet ordre, que les piquets Persans ont été retirés, et qu'il a tout lieu de croire que le Chargé d'Affaires Britannique est satisfait de ce résultat.

Le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères remercie Sir Edward Grey des assurances qu'il veut bien lui donner concernant la politique suivie par le Gouvernement Britannique par rapport à la crise actuelle en Perse, et ne doute pas un instant de la parfaite loyauté avec laquelle cette politique est appliquée par les Agents Anglais en Perse; de son côté, le Cabinet Impérial déclare qu'il reste invariablement fidèle à l'entente établie entre les deux Gouvernements concernant la Perse, et au principe de non-intervention dans les affaires intérieures Persanes. Soucieux d'éviter tout malentendu local, il vient de confirmer encore une fois au Ministre de Russie à Téhéran les instructions enjoignant aux Agents Russes en Perse d'observer l'attitude

la plus amicale envers la Légation Britannique, et il a le ferme espoir que l'incident dont fait mention l'aide-mémoire de l'Ambassade d'Angleterre ne troublera en aucune façon l'action commune de la Russie et de l'Angleterre en Perse.

Saint-Petersbourg, le 18 Juin, 1908.

[23184]

No. 71.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 302.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 1, 1908.

I ALLUDED to-day, in conversation with M. Isvolsky, in order to obtain an expression of his Excellency's views, to the new situation created in Persia by recent events. I said that the allegations levelled against the staff of the British Legation of taking the side of the Popular party, the truth of which I of course entirely denied, seemed to me besides to have lost all "actuality." The Shah had now got the upper hand of the Popular party, and was apparently going to govern during three months without an Assembly and with a Russian Governor-General. The present danger was lest Russia should be credited with backing a despotic and reactionary régime, and lest it should be said of England either that she had joined Russia in this policy, or else that all co-operation between her and Russia had ceased. To guard against this danger, I supposed it would be necessary to advise the Shah to govern constitutionally, and to remind His Majesty of the pledges he had given to the two Powers.

M. Isvolsky cordially assented. He said, however, that he had no information from M. de Hartwig as to Colonel Liakhoff having been appointed Governor-General. On the contrary, M. de Hartwig had reported a few days ago that another person, a Persian, had been named "Governor." The Colonel's position was that of instructor of the Cossack brigade. The standing instructions to him from the Imperial Government were against his commanding the brigade when taking military action. If he had really accepted the post of Governor-General, this would be outside his instructions ("en dehors de ses instructions"). M. Isvolsky intimated that he was communicating with Tehran on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

[23187]

No. 72.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 303.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 2, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 185 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of an *aide-mémoire*, substance of which I communicated to you in my telegram No. 109 of yesterday's date, in regard to the joint representations to be made by the two Representatives at Tehran respecting the Zil-es-Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

Inclosure in No. 72.

Aide-mémoire.

LE Gouvernement Impérial se range entièrement à l'avis du Cabinet de St. James au sujet de la prière adressée par Zilli-Sultan à Mr. Marling et pense que, si ce Prince quittait définitivement la Perse, cela ne pourrait que contribuer d'une façon éminemment efficace à la tranquillisation du pays. Le Cabinet de Saint-Petersbourg se déclare prêt à expédier au Ministre de Russie à Téhéran des instructions l'invitant à se joindre aux démarches que Mr. Marling serait chargé d'entreprendre dans cette question auprès du Schah.

Le Gouvernement Impérial considère comme bien entendu que ces démarches consisteraient à persuader le Schah de permettre à Zilli-Sultan et à ceux des membres

de sa famille et des personnes de son entourage qui voudront le suivre, de quitter la Perse, en leur garantissant la vie sauve et la sécurité de leurs biens. Il est à noter, néanmoins, qu'à plusieurs reprises déjà le Prince avait témoigné de son désir de partir pour l'Europe et que malgré cela il remettait invariablement son départ sous différents prétextes. Par suite, le Gouvernement Impérial trouve extrêmement désirable que Zilli-Sultan, de son côté, confirme ses engagements d'Avril 1907 d'une manière solennelle et dans une forme qui serait fixée d'un commun accord entre MM. de Hartwig et Marling, et qu'il promette catégoriquement aux Représentants des deux Puissances de se mettre sur-le-champ en route pour l'Europe aussitôt l'autorisation obtenue. Afin d'éviter des complications possibles, il serait préférable, semble-t-il, que le Prince choisisse la route la plus proche, celle de Bouchir, par exemple; dans ce cas un vaisseau Anglais pourrait, peut-être, si le Gouvernement Britannique le trouvait nécessaire, être mis à la disposition du Prince et des personnes l'accompagnant, afin de parer à l'avance à toute tentative de sa part de débarquer dans un autre port Persan quelconque.

Si le Cabinet de Londres se trouve d'accord avec les considérations exposées ci-dessus, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères ne manquera pas de munir M. de Hartwig d'instructions en ce sens.

Saint-Petersbourg, le 18 Juin (1^{er} Juillet), 1908.

[23095]

No. 73.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 291.)

Sir,

Berlin, June 30, 1908.

THE Ehtesham-es-Sultanh Mahmud Khan, Persian Minister at this Court, has granted an interview to a reporter of the "Berliner Tageblatt," in which he gave some account of his previous career, his political sympathies, and his opinions on current politics in his native country.

As the Ehtesham is Minister-Designate to London, his remarks may be of some interest to you.

Mahmud Khan is of the Kajar family, and therefore a relative of the Shah. He was born in 1861. His education was entirely Persian, and he never studied at a foreign University. He first served in the internal administration as Governor of Kurdistan and then went into the diplomatic service, being appointed Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg, and later Consul-General at Bagdad. After leaving Bagdad he served for some time as an Under-Secretary of State in the Persian Foreign Office, and in 1901 was appointed Persian Minister at this Court. During his tenure of office here he has, however, filled two other posts: the first in 1906 as Commissioner on the Perso-Turkish Frontier Commission, and the second from the autumn of last year until this spring as President of the Persian Parliament.

The Ehtesham declares himself to have been during the whole of his career a member of the Constitutional party, to which, according to him, belong the majority of his colleagues and the greater number of the members of the Kajar house.

He admits that the Parliament, during its two years of existence, committed many faults; it often needlessly traversed the rights of the Throne; and it failed to realize its dreams of reform. Still it succeeded in introducing a certain amount of order into the Budget; it laid the foundation for the free expression of public opinion, it stopped the more flagrant forms of injustice, and it encouraged the national sentiments of the Persians.

That the Parliament often showed a demagogic spirit was due to two causes: the want of money and the at times active and at times passive opposition of the Shah, who is entirely under the influence of Russian councillors. The most pernicious of these councillors are His Imperial Majesty's Private Secretary, the Russian Shapshak, and the Commander of the Cossack brigade, Linkhoff, also a Russian. It was due to these men and to the Persian reactionaries that the attempted *coup d'état* of last December was brought about, and they have now repeated it with more success.

The Minister then proceeded to praise the action of the Diplomatic Corps, both during last year and at the present time, for the careful manner in which they, without interfering in the internal affairs of the country, drew the attention of the Shah to the dangers of civil war. He especially praised the action of Baron von Richthofen when in charge of the German Legation last year, and he attributed the success of the efforts

of the diplomatists in a large degree to the popularity and great influence of that gentleman.

The Ehtesham hesitated to express a definite opinion on the latest events in Persia, but he declared it to be his firm opinion that it would be impossible to abolish the Constitution. Should the Shah fail to summon a new Parliament shortly a lengthy civil war would be imminent, in which the Zill-es-Sultan would very possibly play a leading part.

The Persian people knew that they would lose their independence with their Parliament, and they would defend it to the last. For this reason, he pointed out that the European nations, and especially England and Germany, had a great interest in the maintenance of the Parliament. Germany had important commercial interests in Persia; soon she would reform the whole Persian educational system by means of a great school in Tehran, and before long she would consolidate her position in Persia by means of the establishment of a German bank.

The Minister asserted that prosperity could only be secured by the maintenance of the Constitution granted by Mozaffer-ed-Din, and by the co-operation of the Shah and the Parliament in carrying out reforms. But in the Ehtesham's opinion, the only method to realize reform was by means of an international loan, which could scarcely be contracted without the erection of an international financial administration.

The Minister concluded the interview by stating that he would leave shortly for London, where he hoped that he would find England true to her policy of two years ago; for it was by British help alone that it was possible to obtain the Constitution.

After his interview with the Minister, the reporter applied to one of the members of the Legation to inform him to what purpose the money raised by the loan mentioned by the Ehtesham would be devoted. He was informed that the first necessity would be to organize an efficient gendarmerie to put an end to the lawless state of the country. Secondly, the system of gathering the taxes must be reformed, in order to insure a regular return of the revenue.

As regards the statement that the German Legation had refused "bast" to refugees, the gentleman interviewed refused to express himself definitely, but the reporter was able to gather that such action on the part of the German Legation was, in the opinion of the Persian Legation here, likely to impair the popularity of Germany in Persia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

[23169]

No. 74.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 363.)

Sir,

Therapia, June 30, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note which the Persian Ambassador has addressed to the Sublime Porte, inclosing copy of a *fakir* sent to the Persian Embassy by the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated the 14th September, 1875, from which it is clear that at that time the Turkish Government admitted that Ushun was unquestionably in Persian territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 74.

Note communicated by the Persian Ambassador to the Ottoman Government.

(Translation.)

Persian Embassy, Constantinople, June 8, 1908.

IN a *muzekkeré*, No. 26, of the 1st June, 1908, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in replying to a previous note addressed to it by this Embassy requesting that a stop should be put to the grave outrages committed by Ottoman Kurds with the co-operation of certain rebel Kurds instigated by officials stationed in frontier posts, outrages such as the invasion of the Persian villages of Uruonia, situated in Persian territory, murder, pillage, and incendiarism, reported from time to time in telegrams from Mahteshem-es-Sultana, President of the Persian Frontier Commission, stated that it had been informed by telegrams dispatched by the Commander of the Sixth Division and forwarded to

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the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Vizierial *teskereh* that the damage done was the work of Persian Kurds acting on the orders of the Governor of Maku and without having been in the slightest degree instigated by Ottoman Kurds; that, moreover, no steps had been taken to punish those who were disturbing the tranquillity of the frontier, those who had killed and burned two Moslems, named Mehmed and Timur, who were murdered by certain Persian officials, and those who had compelled Dul Agha and others to leave their villages and fly for refuge to the Kaza of Ushnu, which forms part of Ottoman territory; that the Persian tribes and regular troops with 300 Armenian revolutionaries had banded together and attacked a village named Jari Kalassi, in the Nahié of Somay, which adjoins the Nahié of Baradost, said to be in Ottoman territory; that some of the tribes whose punishment is demanded live on the Ottoman side of the frontier, and will not be able to remain tranquil on seeing their relatives slain; and that up to the present not a single Ottoman frontier tribe had given the slightest pretext for any kind of aggression. It was furthermore stated that it would seem fitting to spread abroad such complaints with regard to Ottoman officials in order to hide the illegal actions of Persian officials.

In the Kaza of Ushnu, [*sic*] together with the surrounding villages and the villages adjoining the towns of Somay and Urmia, which are referred to as being in Ottoman territory by the aforesaid Divisional Commander, have been without question for several centuries the clear and undisputed property of the Persian Government, and it needs no affirmation that they are in the Province of Azerbaijan. Moreover, not only can it be demonstrated and ascertained on reference to Ottoman and foreign maps that the places mentioned are in Persian territory, but a *muzekkeré* (copy of which is inclosed), No. 24, sent to this Embassy by the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 2nd September, 1876, clearly and explicitly states that Ushnu and its environs form part of Persian territory. Furthermore, a *takrir* sent by this Embassy, No. 64 of the 30th May, 1908, stated that the aggressions of Ottoman troops and officials in the places mentioned had provoked a rising of Persian Kurds, who are for the most part Sunnis and had therefore disturbed local tranquillity, and that, with regard to the mustering of Armenian revolutionaries, careful investigation had made it clear that this report was totally devoid of any real foundation, the truth being that the report was the invention pure and simple of Mendouh Bey, Consul-General at Selmas, who is at present in Urmia, and was devised by him with the intention of causing a rising. This Embassy inclosed translations of two *takrirs* sent to it by the Ministry in Tehran, and stating the true facts of the aggression for the consideration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and also communicated by *takrir* No. 65 of the 30th May, 1908, a translation of two telegrams from the President of the Frontier Commission, Muhteshem-es-Sultana, to the effect that Zerza Mustafa Khan had been sent with a large force from Ushnu by the Ottoman frontier officials to the villages on the banks of the Lake of Urmia, had committed many outrages, and had made an attack on the inhabitants of the said villages to compel them to become his allies and accomplices. The rebel Kurds attacked the town of Dul and the fort of Shartian Abad, which they had been besieging for four or five days. Incited by them, 5,000 Kurds of the Zaza Manish and other tribes surrounding the fort of Shartian Abad besieged Desht, Dul, and Nil, blockaded the roads between Urmia and Salduz and Savchilagh, burnt the villages of Kerkun Rud and Mejidi, killed thirty of their inhabitants, and took eight women captive. In addition, 100 persons are missing, but whether they are alive or dead is not yet known. Copies of a telegram from the Persian Ministry, dated the 2nd June, 1908, have been forwarded to the Sublime Porte in regard to these matters, and translations of three telegrams, well worthy of perusal, from Muhteshem-es-Sultana concerning the active continuance of these aggressions and infringements of Persian rights were inclosed at the same time for the careful consideration of the Sublime Porte. Since it has been shown and verified by legal details and proofs that the above-mentioned places now occupied by Ottoman troops are the real and undisputed property of the Persian Government, the pretensions put forward by Ferik Fazil Pasha and other officials and military officers that there has been no invasion of Persian territory, and that the said districts are in Ottoman territory, are based on the desire to conceal their own aggressions, for the Persian Government has from time to time made it clear that the disturbances of local peace and the revolt of the Kurds are the result and the fruit of incitement and provocation on the part of the aforesaid Pasha and other Ottoman officials. This state of affairs being inimical to friendly relations between two Moslem Powers and contrary to the Imperial *Irade* issued forbidding the seizure of a single foot of Persian soil, and totally out of conformity with the oft-repeated assurances of the Sublime Porte, this Embassy begs that, with the object of restoring local security and putting an end to the

existing regrettable occurrences, the soldiers at present in certain villages and districts in Persian territory should be ordered as soon as possible to withdraw to the Ottoman side of the frontier, and that measures should be taken to definitely prevent such interference in Persian affairs, and that the result should be communicated to this Embassy for transmission to the Persian Government.

Inclosure 2 in No. 74.

Takrir communicated by the Ottoman Government to the Persian Embassy.

(Translation.)

September 2, 1875.

ON receipt of a *takrir* from the Persian Embassy, No. 152 of the 2nd June, 1875, stating that Sheikh Obeidullah Effendi, at the head of 5,000 carbineers and mounted men of the Guya, Heriki, and Rund tribes, had invaded Persian territory, had made a sudden night attack on the place called Ushnu (a dependency of Urmia), and had dared to plunder the inhabitants of the town and even to kill them, and that certain bands of Ottoman troops from the district of Van and Lahijan had crossed the frontier and had committed similar depredations, and further containing certain expressions of opinion in regard to these affairs, the Vilayet of Erzeroum was communicated with in order to ascertain the truth of the matter. In the telegram sent in reply, the Vilayet explicitly stated and declared that the aforesaid allegations were absolutely without foundation, but that on the contrary the Heriki tribe, on being defeated by Persian brigands, had returned and transferred their dwellings to Himar and its neighbourhood, and that the above-mentioned Sheikh had prevented from rising the tribes of Baradost (in the Kaza of Revanduz) and Siniji, who were massing against the people of Ushnu at the instigation of the people of Shendenan, who, on a rumour that the tribe of Baradost had gone to Ushnu and were pillaging and plundering there, were on the point of setting out for the same place in order to capture prisoners and who were seconded in their endeavours to incitement by Zahab Khan and Timur Bey. Moreover, the telegram absolutely denied that a single man of the Ottoman tribes who live in the neighbourhood of Van went to the district of Ushnu, and stated that, the authorities of Revanduz being powerless to prevent and put a stop to the occurrences which are the cause of the complaint and which were brought about, Hajji Wahab and his accomplices had attributed all evil deeds of this kind to the aforesaid Sheikh. Not only has the Sheikh not brought about the events attributed to him and referred to in the *takrir* of the Persian Embassy mentioned above, but the good effects of the measure and precautions to be taken to put a stop to the warlike proceedings of the tribes are patent to all; the aforesaid occurrences are none of his doing; these acts of aggression are initiated and carried on by Ottoman tribes, instigated by frontier Persian officials, and especially by Zahab Khan and Timur Bey. This being so, and no cause of complaint being able to be shown to exist on the part of the Ottoman officials, measures should be taken to insure the attention of Persian officials to the satisfactory performance of their duties, and such as have committed any evil deeds should be punished. Your Excellency will see the expediency of doing this.

I seize, &c.

(Signed) SAFVET,
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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No. 75.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 196.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 5, 1908.

BASTIS in His Majesty's Legation.

My telegram No. 188 of the 3rd instant.

A letter requesting an appointment miscarried, or Minister for Foreign Affairs would have come to see me yesterday.

All demands of His Majesty's Government will be accepted by the Shah, but His Majesty desires with regard to demand No. 4 that a few of the *bastis* should leave the country. Number would not exceed three or four.

Compliance with His Majesty's wishes would, I venture to think, tend to remove possible causes of difficulty with both Persian and Russian Governments in the future.

Period of absence of these persons from Persia should, however, I think, be limited to, say, one year; a stipulation should also be made that, so long as he abstains from agitation against the Shah, any one returning after such a period shall not be molested. Those who return before expiration of period would of course do so at their own risk. Refugees would be condemned to exile for life unless a definite period is fixed on.

Some of the refugees may possibly refuse to accept the terms eventually agreed upon between the two Governments, and may decline to leave in order to use His Majesty's Legation as a political lever. To surrender to the Persian Government would produce an impression most unfavourable to us in Persia, and I should be glad of instructions as to what I should do.

Text of apology will be submitted to me for my approval by Minister for Foreign Affairs.

If you see no objection, I should be glad to comply with His Highness' desire that he and Shah's Representative should make apologies separately. His Highness has done his utmost to help me throughout this affair, and I should like to oblige him.

Following is secret :-

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me very confidentially that presence of patrols, which continued in a modified and less objectionable form all to-day, is due solely to Russian Colonel.

M. de Hartwig has written me a friendly note, to which I have replied in the same strain. M. Lecomte's good offices, I have reason to believe, are the reason of this.

[23375]

No. 76.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 197.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 6, 1908.

ON the 2nd instant Mowayed ed-Dowleh, who was Governor of Tehran before the events of the 23rd ultimo, and nominally was never dismissed, was reappointed Governor-General.

Late last night I received a note from Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that our ghokams were systematically encouraging people to take bast in the Legation. His Highness' note shows clearly that he does not believe the story. There appears to have been some talk in the bazars of taking bast, and I am making inquiries into the origin of Minister for Foreign Affairs' complaint.

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No. 77.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Brien.

(No. 225.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 6, 1908.

PATROLS round Legation at Tehran.

You should inform M. Isvolsky of the substance of my telegram to Mr. Marling No. 161 of the 6th July, and ask that urgent instructions may be sent to the Russian Minister to support the representations which Mr. Marling is to make.

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No. 78.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 161.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 6, 1908.

PATROLS near Legation.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 189 of the 1th July and Nos. 195 and 196 of the 5th July.

As long as the patrols continue no apology can be accepted, and if the patrols are not withdrawn immediately and completely we shall no longer consider that the demands already formulated by us are sufficient to meet the case.

Inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[19160]

No. 79.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 6, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd ultimo, relative to the question of the maintenance or abolition of the branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia at present working at Nasratabad.

Sir E. Grey has been in communication with Sir T. Jackson on the subject.

Sir T. Jackson is very reluctant to withdraw the branch from Seistan as he is not without hope that it may become self-supporting in the future, and he thinks it not improbable that a German bank with less restrictions as to the class of business dealt would establish itself in its place. It was pointed out that His Majesty's Government would in any case be unable to increase the subsidy, and Sir Thomas, after consulting his Board, has now informed the Secretary of State that he is willing to maintain the branch with the present subsidy.

Sir E. Grey feels that there are great disadvantages in abandoning a British enterprise of this nature, and he therefore hopes that Lord Morley will see his way to continuing the contribution for two years, when the question can be reconsidered.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[21936]

No. 80.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 6, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, relative to the alleged intention of the Russian Government to appoint a Military Attaché to their Consulate in Seistan.

I am to inform you, in reply, that in the first place Sir E. Grey has instructed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg to endeavour to ascertain whether the report which has reached His Majesty's Government of the intentions of the Russian Government in this matter has any foundation, and I am to add that, pending the receipt of an answer to that communication, he would be glad to learn the views of the Government of India on the subject.

Sir E. Grey is of opinion that, should the report prove to be well founded, and should it be decided, in consequence, to ask the Russian Government not to give effect to this appointment, His Majesty's Government must be prepared to withdraw the Military Attaché from His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23471]

No. 81.

Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons to Foreign Office.—(Received July 7.)

(Confidential.)

Sir,

111, Portland Street, Manchester, July 6, 1908.

WE have the honour to own receipt of your favour of the 3rd instant concerning the application of Mr. Hajji Ali Asgar, on behalf of this Company, to the Persian Government for a Concession to work the mines of red oxide which are to be found on the Island of Siri.

We beg to put before you the following facts :-

On the 12th April last our Managing Director, Mr. H. Agha, then travelling in the Persian Gulf, telegraphed to this Company's agent in Tehran, Mr. Hajji Ali Asgar, as follows :-

"Siri Island, opposite Lingah, 50 miles distant. Persian Government revenue 20l. a year. Obtain Concession for fifteen years to work red oxide. Confidential. Reply."

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On the 13th instant Mr. H. Agha received a letter from His Majesty's Consul-General in Bushire, the copy of which we now inclose.

To this our Mr. Agha replied at once, copy of which is also inclosed.

You will see that he then assured His Majesty's Consul-General that should we succeed in obtaining such a Concession, it would be entirely for British interests.

Whilst our Managing Director was in Tehran in the early part of June he had an interview with His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Marling, on this subject.

We take it that the island in question is Persian territory, and that we can safely apply to the Persian Government for this Concession.

As to the Guarantee required by His Majesty's Government, we have instructed our Solicitors, Messrs. Hollans, Sons, Coward, and Hawksley, of London, to prepare such a Guarantee, which will be signed by our Directors and sent to you within a week.

We are &c.
(For Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons (Limited),
(Signed) H. BREWERTON, Manager.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Consul-General Cox to Mirza Hussein Agha.

Dear Mirza Hussein Agha, Bushire, April 13, 1908.
I HEAR a report that your firm or an agent thereof is negotiating with the Persian Government for a Concession granting prospecting rights or rights to mine oxide on Sirra Island.

Will you kindly let me know if there is any foundation at all for this report, and, if so, how the negotiation has been incepted, i.e., whether by your firm, as a British Company, through His Majesty's Legation, or whether by an employé of yours, *quâ* Persian subject, with the Persian authorities direct?

Any information you give me will be treated as confidential as far as any other firm is concerned.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) P. Z. COX.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

Mirza Hussein Agha to Consul-General Cox.

Dear Sir, Bushire, April 13, 1908.

I AM in receipt of your favour of even date.

Regarding the report that my people are negotiating with the Persian Government for a Concession granting prospecting rights to mine oxide at Sirra, I beg to inform you that it is a fact only so far that I have wired by brother, Hadji Mirza Ali Asghar, of Tehran, to obtain such a Concession from the Persian Government.

No doubt you are well aware that the Persian Government does not grant Concessions to foreign subjects, and my brother will probably try and obtain the Concession in his own name, though my firm as a British Company will have the absolute control.

Should we succeed in obtaining such a Concession, it will I assure you only benefit British interests.

I am starting for Shiraz early to-morrow morning.

Yours obediently,
(Signed) HUSSEIN AGHA.

[23424] No. 82.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 198.)
(Telegraphic.) P. Tehran, July 6, 1908.

MY immediately preceding telegram of to-day.

Russian Minister, whom I saw this morning, was most conciliatory. He displayed great ingenuity in explaining away the Proclamation under which Colonel Liakhoff was

appointed Governor of Tehran, and declared that it was not the Colonel but Amir Bahadur Jang who was responsible for the continuance of the Cossack patrols round the Legation. On this latter point I accepted his Excellency's assurances. M. de Hartwig then admitted that the Persian Governor of the town had no control over Colonel Liakhoff, as no Russian officer could ever be in such a position. He added that the policing, &c., of the city was confided to the Cossack brigade so long as the state of siege continued, and Colonel Liakhoff's powers were simply those of the officer in command of that brigade.

In telling M. de Hartwig of the Minister for Foreign Affairs' private letter to me of last night respecting rumours that our gholams were trying to get people to take bast with us *en masse*, I assured his Excellency that I was convinced there was no truth in these reports. When he (M. de Hartwig) had made allegations against my gholams I had done my best to investigate them, but my inquiries had been made very difficult through lack of definite charges. His Excellency said Colonel Liakhoff had plenty of facts which he would furnish me with. In view of the report from the bazaars that an attempt might be made to take bast, which I mentioned to his Excellency, I expressed the hope that he would use his best endeavours, as I myself was doing, to let it be generally known that the Legation would not lend itself to such a thing under any circumstances whatever.

In further conversation M. de Hartwig laid a good deal of stress on the good results in the capital and in the provinces, where complete tranquillity prevailed, produced by the *coup d'État*. In these circumstances, I replied, nothing would more surely restore confidence in the Shah's promises and remove any possible excuse for taking bast in the Legation than to convoke Parliament without delay.

The tone of our conversation was very friendly, and even cordial. M. de Hartwig even hinted that it might be possible to induce Nasr-ul-Mulk to return to Persia and become Finance Minister.

Following is very confidential:—

M. de Hartwig also said that he ardently desired to obtain leave of absence in the autumn, and he expressed the hope that he would manage to arrange his transfer to another post when he was in St. Petersburg.

[23376] No. 83.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 199.)
(Telegraphic.) P. Tehran, July 6, 1908.

PERSIAN situation.

Following is confidential:—

My telegram No. 198 of to-day.

Would it be possible to approach Russian Government with a proposal that a joint representation be made to Shah inviting his Majesty to convoke Parliament at an early date? I venture to suggest that such action on our part would be desirable.

During the three months before the new elections take place the advisers of the Shah hope to remodel the Constitution by creating the Senate which is contemplated by the Constitution, and probably by enacting an Electoral Law. Any scheme of the kind which the Minister might submit would not, I think, be opposed by the present Assembly, and confidence would be to a great extent restored in the country by the confirmation even by a rump Parliament of any scheme which would have the appearance of respect for the Constitution.

[23377] No. 84.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 200.)
(Telegraphic.) P. Tehran, July 6, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Identical communication in the sense suggested in your telegram No. 132 of the 29th ultimo is being drawn up by M. de Hartwig and myself.

[23378]

No. 85.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 201.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 6, 1908.

COMMUNICATION made by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg to Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs was, according to M. de Hartwig, nothing less than a suggestion that His Majesty's Government should urge the Shah to send Zil-es-Sultan out of the country. I replied that when we had last spoken of this matter I had understood that he too was under this impression, and that he had received instructions as reported in your telegram No. 150 of the 2nd July. M. de Hartwig said that the Zil had requested leave to go abroad, and that he believed the Shah had no special desire to see him do so.

In these circumstances, I replied, the case for making representations to the Shah had not presented itself. M. de Hartwig did not demur to this statement.

[23496]

No. 86.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 202.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 7, 1908.

COSSACKS round His Majesty's Legation. My telegram of the 5th instant, No. 196.

The Persian Governor of Tehran, and not Colonel Liakhoff, now signs Proclamations. The patrols round the Legation have ceased.

Persian Government is being strongly urged to comply with our demands by M. de Hartwig, with whom my relations will, I think, be quite cordial in the future.

[23505]

No. 87.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 203.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 7, 1908.

I RECEIVED last night, for my private information, draft of reply to the note conveying demands of His Majesty's Government which I had addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I did not consider the terms of the draft entirely satisfactory, and I have suggested considerable emendations.

The note now commences with an expression of regret for improper acts, which are ascribed to subordinate officials. It then simply states that His Majesty's Government's five demands are accepted by the Persian Government, and expresses the wish of His Majesty that certain of the refugees should go out of Persia.

You do not, I presume, wish me to send you by telegraph for your approval text of proposed apology or of note accepting demands.

I have subsequently received your telegram No. 169.

[23494]

No. 88.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 204.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 7, 1908.

FOLLOWING is confidential:

The Financial Adviser to the Persian Government has been sounded by the new Finance Minister as to a loan or advance. M. Bizot has asked me what the views of His Majesty's Government would be. In reply, I expressed my conviction that His Majesty's Government would agree to nothing which had not received Parliamentary sanction.

Proposal of the Minister of Finance need not for the moment, I think, be taken very seriously into consideration.

[23506]

No. 89.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 205.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 7, 1908.

THE Zil-es-Sultan has left Shiraz, but Acting Consul, in reporting this, does not say where he has gone.

Consul has been instructed to inform Zil that before going to Ispahan he would do well to consult the Shah.

[23502]

No. 90.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 114.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 7, 1908.

PERSIAN affairs.

Your telegram No. 225 of the 6th instant.

M. Isvolsky informs me that he will at once send instructions by telegraph in the sense desired to Russian Minister at Tehran, but suggests that, in view of the fact that telegrams between St. Petersburg and Tehran are much delayed in transmission, it would have been better that Mr. Marling should have applied direct to M. de Hartwig.

[23507]

No. 91.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 115.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 7, 1908.

CRISIS in Persia.

The "Novoe Vremya" in its issue of to-day publishes a telegram from Tehran in which the incidents in connection with the surrounding of the British Legation by Cossacks are described in a light which is very unfavourable to His Majesty's Legation, the telegram representing the Legation as intriguing against the Russian Colonel.

I took an opportunity to suggest to Minister for Foreign Affairs that it would be desirable that statements should be published both in London and St. Petersburg, saying that the British and Russian Legations were co-operating to obtain satisfaction for what had already occurred, and to insure the cessation in future of the proceedings offensive to the British Legation.

M. Isvolsky said that, without waiting to hear whether you were prepared to adopt a similar course, he would at once issue a statement to the proposed effect.

[23087]

No. 92.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 160.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1908.

REFUGEES at Legation.

With reference to your telegram No. 196 of the 5th July.

Separate apologies may be agreed to.

Your proposal that in the case of a refugee leaving the country the period of his expatriation should be definitely limited is accepted by His Majesty's Government, as also the stipulation that so long as he does not take part in agitation such refugee should, on his return, be free from molestation. We might concede a longer term if the period of one year is insufficient.

You should inform any of the refugees who may refuse to leave the Legation that they cannot be allowed to remain, but that a safe conduct will be obtained for them to leave

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the country. It is not possible that refuge at a Legation can be continued indefinitely without constituting a source of interference in the politics and internal affairs of the country. It is only permissible temporarily as a protection when there is imminent danger to life.

[23378]

No. 93.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 163.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1908.

I DO not understand the last sentence of your telegram No. 201 of the 6th July respecting the Zil-es-Sultan. There appears to be an error in transmission.

If, as I understand, it is the wish of the Zil to leave the country, the case has arisen for a joint representation to be made to the Shah requesting His Majesty to allow this, and to give a guarantee for the security of his possessions and property. In these circumstances concerted action with the Russian Minister should be taken.

[23505]

No. 94.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 164.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1908.

INSULTS to Legation. With reference to your telegram No. 203 of to-day. You need not telegraph texts of note or of apology.

[23607]

No. 95.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 199.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 7, 1908.

COUNT BENCKENDORFF inquired to-day what news I had from Persia.

I told him that Mr. Marling was very emphatic as to the friendly attitude which M. Hartwig had now taken up towards him. The patrols were continued round the Legation as lately as Sunday, and I had told the Persian Government that we could not accept an apology till this practice was discontinued, and that, if it was not discontinued, we should have to consider whether the demands we had now made were adequate.

I also told Count Benckendorff that Mr. Marling had doubted whether the time had yet come to make a representation about the Zil, but that I had telegraphed to say that I thought the Zil's own request to be allowed to leave the country provided a ground for making a representation to the Shah that he should be allowed to do so. We could not ask the Shah to deport the Zil against the Zil's own wish, but we could ask the Shah to accede to the Zil's request.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[23542]

No. 96.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 8.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, paraphrase of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 3rd July, relative to the situation in Persia.

India Office, July 7, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 96.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 3, 1908.

SITUATION in Persia.

Instructions were sent on the 1st instant to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran to present to Persian Government the following demands:—

1. Cossacks and police to be withdrawn from British Legation.
2. Full apology to be tendered with due ceremony.
3. Persons arrested while going to, or coming from, Legation on ordinary business to be released.
4. Guarantee in writing for person and property of bastis to be given by Shah.
5. Fair trial, in the presence of a member of the British Legation, to be granted to any bastis charged with crimes other than political offences.

Persian Government will be warned that His Majesty's Government will be compelled to exact reparation if above demands are not immediately complied with.

On the same day His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg was instructed to inform the Russian Government that the above instructions had been sent, and to urge upon them the importance of supporting our demands, as action in the Gulf or in Southern Persia would be necessary if those demands are not complied with.

On the 1st instant, before the receipt of the above, Mr. O'Beirne reported that M. Isvolsky had given him satisfactory assurances, and that renewed instructions to observe most friendly attitude towards British Legation had been sent to Russian Minister at Tehran.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs seemed to be quite prepared to support demand on the part of His Majesty's Government for satisfaction, and he stated formally that the *entente* between the two Governments respecting Persia and the principle of non-intervention still commanded the faithful adherence of the Russian Government.

The Russian Government agree to join in the proposed representation to the Shah with regard to the Zil-es-Sultan; they urge, however, that engagements of April 1907 should be solemnly confirmed by Zil, and that a definite promise should be given by him that, on receipt of permission, he will at once proceed to Europe.

Embarkation on a British ship at Bushire is suggested.

[23625]

No. 97.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 119.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 8, 1908.

IN a conversation which I had to-day with M. Isvolsky, his Excellency alluded to the recent events in Persia and to the question of Russia's position in that country. His Excellency was inclined to think that Colonel Liakhoff had been obliged by force of circumstances to act as he had done, but said that the Colonel's action had been taken quite independently of the Russian Government, and that in any case it was not agreeable to him, as it placed on the Russian Government a responsibility which the latter did not desire to undertake. M. Isvolsky added that he had explained this to the Head of the General Staff, who was Colonel Liakhoff's chief, and that the latter had agreed that it was regrettable that the Colonel had played so prominent a part. The same was to be said regarding the part just taken by the Russian Consul-General in Tabreez in the course of events in that town. In his Excellency's opinion the action of the latter official was also undesirable, but he said that it was difficult for M. Pokhiltonoff to refuse appeals to use his influence towards pacification, as his long residence in Tabreez had secured him a special position there. M. Isvolsky said in conclusion that, to tide over difficulties such as he had indicated, he relied chiefly on harmonious action between the British and Russian Governments. In his opinion it is not at all sure that the Shah has gained a decisive victory, and I gather that he is apprehensive lest, in the event of serious troubles occurring, Russia might through the action of her agents become involved in them. This is a danger against which his Excellency will, I think, do his best to guard.

[23626]

No. 98.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 159.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 8, 1908.

I HAVE received the following telegram No. 43, dated the 6th instant, from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw:—

"Fifty Turkish cavalry and a company of infantry, some of whom are composed, I am given to understand, of recent arrivals from Van, have proceeded to Charik from Tergavar. It is stated in Turkish circles that a move on Salmas is contemplated in the near future.

"As the town of Tabreez is entirely absorbed by local affairs, the events at Tebran do not seem to make any impression on the population."

[23620]

No. 99.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 206.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 8, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN. Referring to your telegram No. 163 of the 6th instant, my meaning was that unless Zil-es-Sultan's departure from Persia were decided on, either by his own wish or by order of the Shah, joint representations on his behalf would not be made. His departure not yet having been decided on, so far as I am aware, I presumed that the Shah and Zil-es-Sultan could be left to compose their quarrel alone, and that we need take no action.

His Majesty's Government do not desire, so I understand, to influence the Shah against the Zil, though in the interests of tranquillity his absence from Persia would be desirable, and, in my opinion, any joint action at present would be tantamount to an invitation to the Shah to expel him from the country.

Zil-es-Sultan is proceeding to Isfahan via the Sarhad route.

[23494]

No. 100.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 166.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 8, 1908.

LOANS to Persia. With reference to your telegrams No. 199 of the 6th instant and No. 201 of the 7th instant

Your action in saying that it is unlikely that, so long as the Constitution is suspended, His Majesty's Government can lend money to Persia is quite right. Such a loan might, in the event of the revival of the Constitution, be repudiated by the Assembly, and it would be impossible for us to feel confident that a loan made in circumstances of this kind would be employed for the good of the country. Although, however, we are not ready to give the Shah any support in violent or arbitrary action, it does not at the present moment appear to me desirable that we should take the initiative in making representations to His Majesty with a view to inducing him to proceed at once to call Parliament together again.

[21783]

No. 101.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 8, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo, inclosing papers relative to a proposal to abolish the Government coal depot at Bushire and to create one at Kowait.

I am to state, for the information of the Secretary of State for India, that Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn the views of the Government of India on this

proposal in due course; but I am to add that it does not appear to Sir E. Grey to be necessary to request an expression of those views by telegraph.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23644]

No. 102.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 9.)

Sir,

India Office, July 7, 1908.

WITH reference to previous correspondence as to the retention of the increased Consular escort at Shiraz, ending with the letter from this Office of the 5th March last, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to inclose, for the consideration of Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of a telegram from the Government of India recommending that the escort be kept at its present strength for a further period of six months.

Lord Morley would be glad to learn the views of Sir E. Grey on this proposal, and, in the event of its meeting with his approval, would have no objection to offer to it, on the understanding that a moiety of the expenditure involved would continue to be defrayed from British revenues.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 102.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 2, 1908.

ESCORTS in Persia.

Please refer to your telegram of the 2nd March: Shiraz.

Consul has made a recommendation to Tehran Legation about reliefs, and question of retaining increased escort has arisen in this connection. We agree with Major Cox and Mr. Bill, both of whom recommend that there should be no reduction of numbers, and we recommend that for a further period of six months the escort should be kept at its present strength.

[23654]

No. 103.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 9.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of correspondence received from the Government of India relative to the protection of Bahreinese and dependants of the Trucial Chiefs in Persia.

It is requested that these inclosures, which are sent in original, may be returned to this Office as soon as done with.

India Office, July 8, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 103.

*Major Cox to Government of India.**Bushire, March 8, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copies of communications addressed by me to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, on the subject of our right to protect dependants of the Trucial Sheikhs while in Persian territory.

Inclosure 2 in No. 103.

Major Cox to Mr. Marling.

Shiraz, October 9, 1907.

IN continuation of the telegraphic correspondence ending with my telegram dated to-day, I have the honour to attach, for your information, a précis of voluminous Memoranda received from my First Assistant in connection with the present troubles at Lingah.

I merely send it for your information, as by the time the communication reaches Tehran action will probably have been taken on the telegraphic correspondence.

I have the honour to draw attention to the fact that M. Waffelaert, Director-General of Customs, Bushire, in the course of correspondence with my Assistant, wrote that, "by virtue of Tehran Circular of the 4th February, 1905," he declined to accept British intervention in two cases concerning subjects of the Sheikhs of Abu Thabi and Shargah.

Both these Chiefs are under British protection, and I request the favour of your indicating the fact to the Persian Government, and calling upon them to issue the necessary instructions to M. Waffelaert advising us that they have done so.

Although he quotes the number of the circular under which he acts, he has expressed his inability to furnish a copy. It may be possible for this to be done at Tehran.

Inclosure 3 in No. 103.

Memorandum respecting Disturbances at Lingah.

THE Ala-es-Sultan, a Bulwardi of Fars, who is understood to have been last employed at Enzeli, took up the post of Director or Mudir of Customs at Lingah on the 1st July, 1907.

In a Report, dated the 5th September, the Residency Agent, Lingah, forwarded copies of correspondence with the agent of the British India Steam Navigation Company, who complained that the Director had refused to take cognizance of a requisition written to him on the Company's business in accordance with previous custom in English, and had sent for him and abused him as an unpatriotic Persian and bad Mussulman for using the English language. On the Residency Agent intervening in the British India agent's behalf, the Director refused to accept his mediation, and denied his right to intervene in his favour. In the same Report it was stated that the Director had assembled the Persian merchants and tried to get them to form a standing Medjliss for the trial of cases and discussion of matters of public importance.

During August he treated with harshness two dhows belonging to subjects of Trucial Arab Chiefs under British protection, namely, Abu Thabi and Shargah. One of them he is believed to have arrested on the high seas and towed into Lingah, where he took all the cargo out of her, notwithstanding that a correct jowaz was found with the owner of the cargo in Lingah. On the Director-General of Customs, Bushire, being asked to state the correct facts, as the action of the Customs was apparently unjustifiable, he expressed his inability to accept any official intervention in regard to "subjects of the Oman Coast" [sic].

In a Report dated the 12th September it was reported that, contrary to usage, the Director had insisted on examining the baggage of a party of pilgrims. On being remonstrated with by the Mullahs he treated them with contumely, and in consequence the inhabitants closed the bazaars in protest. Subsequently a disturbance occurred, in which the Director was mobbed and beaten.

In a communication dated the 11th September it was reported that the Director, having fallen out with the Shia Mullahs, held a meeting of Sunni merchants, with whom were the Sadeed-es-Sultaneh, Russian Agent and a notorious rascal; the French Consular Agent, a Persian of shady character; and the *soi-disant* Turkish Consular Agent, of whom I have several times complained.

In the case of the British Indian steam-ship "Nuddea" the Agent asked for special permission to work on Fridays and holidays, allowable under Article 113 of the "Règlement," and always freely accorded hitherto. No notice was taken of the Agent's note, but eventually verbal permission was given through the hamel-bashi.

In the case of the "Madura," the following week, the same delay in the accord of permission occurred, and the ship lost a day thereby. In the first case the Director, after ignoring the Agent's civil written request, discourteously sent a "tufangchi" to fetch him, taunted him with being in the employ of a British firm, and made disrespectful remarks about the English language and the use of it.

On the 16th a telegram was received *via* Henjam from His Britannic Majesty's Consul, saying that the Director had closed customs, and the forwarding and handling of British merchandize was suspended at inconvenience and loss to the owners.

On the 17th September another telegram was received, saying that the Director had held another meeting of the Sunnis and persons above referred to, and told them that he had been beaten because he had joined them, and that as he had closed the customs they (the Sunnis) must stop trading and support him.

At this and another similar Medjliss the Director made several other foolish speeches, in which he pronounced, among other things—

1. That British certificates of naturalization are useless, and should be given up.
2. That the British Government has no right to protect Omanis, as Oman belongs to Persians.

On the 8th October the mail brought news that the entire Customs' staff had resigned, and the Director of Customs dare not leave his house.

September , 1907.

Inclosure 4 in No. 103.

Major Cox to Mr. Marling.

Bushire, March 8, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to refer to the third paragraph of my despatch dated the 9th October, 1907, in which I drew your attention to the fact that the local Customs authorities refuse to accept our intervention on behalf of the subjects of the Sheikhs of "Trucial Oman."

Recent events have brought our protectorate over these Sheikhs into some prominence, and I hope it may be considered that we are now in a more favourable position for obtaining a formal recognition of it from the Persian Government.

Inclosure 5 in No. 103.

Captain Trevor to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bushire, May 18, 1908.

MR. MARLING telegraphs, dated the 17th May:—

"Following from Foreign Office, telegram No. 100:—

"Protection of Bahreinis. Persian Government should be pressed by you to send amended note without delay, but we are reluctant to raise general question for the present unless the note contains any expression which can be construed as disputing our rights and unless further cases arise.

"Protection of subjects of Trucial Chiefs. Assurances given to His Majesty's Consul-General by Governor of Bushire appear sufficient if carried out to meet needs of case in question."

Inclosure 6 in No. 103.

Captain Trevor to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bushire, May 18, 1908.

FOLLOWING sent to Tehran:—

"Please see your telegram No. 78.

"Governor has given no assurances in regard to actual case of Bahreini, but has several times told Resident that he has instructions from the Persian Government to treat Bahrein as Persian territory, *vide* Resident's telegram of the 1st May. Deputy

Governor of Lingah, who arrived here three days ago, has been suspended in connection with this and other cases. One of the Lingah factions, aided by Brown, the Lingah agent of German firm, and by Russian Consular Agent, is trying to get him reinstated. I am endeavouring to get Governor to recover compensation for Bahrein from him, none having been paid as yet. In view of attitude of Persian Government, I fear that we shall not be able locally to obtain adequate redress.

"It is instructive to note that, while the Financial Department of the Persian Government considers Bahrein a foreign port and levies customs duties against it, the Foreign Department treat it as Persian territory."

Inclosure 7 in No. 103.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Sir,

Bushire, May 5, 1908.

WITH reference to my covering letter dated the 8th March, 1908, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of Mr. Marling's reply to my letter of the same date on the subject of our right to protect subjects of the Trucial Chiefs when in Persian territory.

I have, &c.

(For Political Resident in the Persian Gulf),

(Signed) A. P. TREVOR, Major.

Note.—The draft of this letter was approved by Major Cox before he proceeded on tour.

Inclosure 8 in No. 103.

Mr. Marling to Major Cox.

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Tehran, April 3, 1908.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 5th March respecting British intervention on behalf of the Sheikhs of Trucial Oman. Our right to insist on the Persian Government accepting such intervention is unassailable in view of our published Treaties of 1892. It seems likely that His Majesty's Government will now insist on final recognition by the Persian Government of our rights respecting Bahrein and Bahreinis also. I am inclined to think that these matters will best be dealt with simultaneously.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[23647]

No. 104.

India Office to Foreign Office,-- (Received July 9.)

Sir,

India Office, July 8, 1908.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th May, as to the appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed, stating that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs regards the appointment as one of purely Indian interest, and that he is unable to apply, on grounds of Imperial necessity, to the Treasury for sanction to the charge to British funds of a moiety of the cost.

In reply, I am to say that the Secretary of State for India in Council regrets to be unable to accept the grounds on which this decision is based. He cannot admit that the duties performed by the Attaché are not of Imperial as well as of Indian interest. It is true, as stated in your letter, that the Convention recently concluded with Russia has removed in great measure the urgent need for the collection of information as to military movements in Russian territory east of the Caspian. But I am to point out that it is in the negative sense that the work of the Attaché is of the greatest value, providing, as it does, the necessary machinery for sifting and disproving on the spot those rumours which in the East are of frequent occurrence,

and which must otherwise reach the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in an exaggerated form. Stress, it will be remembered, was laid on this aspect of the question in Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's despatch No. 168 of the 24th July, 1907, who also urged the importance from the political point of view of the Legation at Tehran being accurately informed as to the proceedings of the Russian authorities in Central Asia.

The bearings of the subject in its military aspect seem to Lord Morley to need further consideration. He would suggest that Sir E. Grey, before regarding his present decision as final, should ascertain whether the Army Council regard the appointment as one which, from the Imperial point of view, may advantageously be dispensed with.

The suggestion in your letter that the duties at present performed by Captain Smyth should be discharged in future either by the Consul-General or the Vice-Consul at Meshed does not seem practicable. The latter officer is usually a member of the Indian Medical Service, and does not possess the necessary technical qualifications. The Consul-General's duties do not afford him sufficient leisure to undertake the work. It was the insufficiency of the news supplied by the staff of the Consulate-General without the assistance of a special officer that led to the appointment of Captain Smyth.

I am to add that, in view of the importance of maintaining the post, the Secretary of State in Council has sanctioned its continuance on the present temporary footing pending a final decision as to the incidence of the cost.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[23793]

No. 105.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey,--(Received July 9.)

(No. 207.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Tehran, July 9, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 157.

Proposal was, I understand, that Lieutenant Ranking should accompany Vice-Consul on his usual summer tour in order, firstly to enable latter to travel away from main routes notably in Kuhgah country or Pushtikuh about which information is very deficient: this necessitates leaving his caravan [?] which he cannot do unless a responsible person be left in charge of it; secondly, to train Ranking to replace Lorimer when he goes on long leave early next year. Lorimer, thinking that Government of India's sanction alone was necessary, took Ranking with him in the absence of a reply to his application and on an understanding with the latter that no unauthorised expense would be caused to Government in case of refusal.

In view of intricate nature of local political questions and need for special qualifications in dealing with Bakhtiari Khans it is most important that a competent man should be available to replace Lorimer, and latter considers Ranking best man for post. This necessity is accentuated by recent find of oil. Considerable progress made already with Ranking's education which will be completed if course suggested be adhered to, thus ensuring continuity of policy. Both are now at Ispahan.

In these circumstances, and in view of Lorimer's opinion additional expense of Ranking being with him instead of at oil works would be inconsiderable, I venture to support proposal.

[23724]

No. 106.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey,--(Received July 9.)

(No. 208.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 9, 1908.

DEMANDS of His Majesty's Government.

Referring to my telegram No. 203 of the 7th instant, Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent me a note, modified in the manner I suggested, which accepts the demands of His Majesty's Government.

[1599]

X

I consider text of the apology and of the Shah's guarantee for the lives, property, and persons of the refugees satisfactory. Saturday has been fixed for the formal tendering of the apology.

[23505] No. 107.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 168.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

INSULTS to Legation.

With reference to your telegram No. 203 of the 7th instant, please report how soon the Shah and the Persian Government are likely to comply with our demands, and to tender the apologies required by His Majesty's Government. (See my telegram No. 145 of the 1st instant.)

It is not possible for us to allow much longer delay for a settlement on these terms.

Foreign Office, July 9, 1908.

[23620] No. 108.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 169.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

With reference to your telegram No. 206 of the 8th instant:

Your telegram No. 158 gave me the impression that His Highness had himself suggested that, if the security of his property were guaranteed, he should leave the country, and had asked for our protection. We therefore asked the Russian Government to join us in making a representation to this effect to the Shah. It does not appear to me that this request has been withdrawn by the Zil-es-Sultan, and in this case I do not understand what objection there is to making the representation. If His Highness remains in Persia, it will be impossible for us to afford him protection.

Foreign Office, July 9, 1908.

[22882] No. 109.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Lister.

(No. 216.)

Sir,

I HAVE received Sir F. Baring's despatch No. 262 of the 1st instant, forwarding copy of a telegram from the French Minister at Tehran to his Government, communicated to his Excellency by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, relative to the attitude of the Russian Minister at that capital towards His Majesty's Legation.

I have to request you to express to M. Pichon the thanks of His Majesty's Government for his courtesy in communicating this document, and to inform him that they highly appreciate the friendly attitude adopted by M. Lecomte in this matter.

Foreign Office, July 9, 1908.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[22072] No. 110.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. MacDonald.**

(No. 168.)

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copies of correspondence relative to the Consular representation of foreign Powers at Bushire,† from which you will perceive that, in view of the fact that the Norwegian Government have appointed a German subject to be their Agent at that port, His Majesty's Consul-General suggests the expediency of securing the appointment of British subjects to represent Japan or Sweden or both those Powers.

It would appear undesirable to prefer to the Governments of these two countries

Foreign Office, July 9, 1908.

* Also to Mr. Dering (No. 57) *relative to Persia*. (See Part XIV, Nos. 242, 276, and 343.)

a definite request that they will confide the protection of their interests at Bushire to British subjects, but I have to instruct your Excellency to take an opportunity of intimating to the Japanese Government that, in the event of their desiring at any time to appoint a Consular Representative at the port, the selection of a British subject in that capacity would be agreeable to His Majesty's Government in view of their special position in the Persian Gulf.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[23761] No. 111.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 10.)

Sir,

India Office, July 9, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 24th ultimo, inclosing copy of a letter from Messrs. Ellinger and Co., as to their proposals with regard to the working of the Concession held by the Main-ut-Tajjar, for the extraction of red oxide on the Island of Hormaz, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the reply which Secretary Sir E. Grey proposes to return to Messrs. Ellinger and Co.'s letter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[23815] No. 112.

The Imperial Ottoman Bank to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 10.)

Sir,

London, July 9, 1908.

WE have the honour to ask the favour of the protection of His Majesty's Government at Tehran on behalf of the Tombac Company ("Société du Tombac"), in which the Imperial Ottoman Bank possesses very important interests.

The Tombac Company, which has the monopoly of the importation and sale in the Ottoman Empire of Persian tumbeki, is supplied principally at Ispahan, and it is feared that the events now transpiring in Persia may place in peril the affairs and the personnel of this Company.

We should be grateful to you if you would be good enough to ask His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to make known to the Imperial Government of Persia that the Tombac Company and its agents may rely upon the high protection of the Legation of His Majesty.

We are informed that the Committee of the Imperial Ottoman Bank in Paris have made, under date of the 6th instant, a similar request in identical terms to their Foreign Minister.

We have, &c.
(For the Committee),
(Signed) BESSBOROUGH.
GOSCHEN.

[23827] No. 113.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 209.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Tehran, July 10, 1908.

Statements contained in Mr. Wratishaw's telegram No. 13 are confirmed by M. de Hartwig, who also states that preparations are being made by the Turks to build barracks at Mawana to accommodate 100 troops.

[23128]

No. 114.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 10, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 7th instant, relative to the retention of the increased Consular escort at Shiraz, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,² urging the desirability of this measure.

I am to request that you will call the attention of Viscount Morley to the last paragraph of this despatch, in which Mr. Marling supports a suggestion put forward by Mr. Graham, till lately His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, that a small number of spare rifles should be kept at His Majesty's Consulate in accordance with the arrangement already in force at His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey concurs with Mr. Marling in considering the proposed measure to be a prudent precaution, and I am to ask you to recommend it to Lord Morley's favourable consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23644]

No. 115.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 10, 1908.

IN reply to your letter of the 7th instant, relative to the retention of the increased Consular escort at Shiraz, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has requested the sanction of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to the continuance of this arrangement for a further period of six months, on the same terms as on the last occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23644]

No. 116.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 10, 1908.

BY your letter of the 13th January last you conveyed to Secretary Sir Edward Grey the consent of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to the charge to Imperial funds of half the additional cost involved by the retention at His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz, for a period of six months, of the escort due for relief on the arrival of the reliefs, whereby the guard of that Consulate was temporarily doubled.

The date on which the reliefs reached Shiraz was the 19th December, 1907, and the period of six months, which must be reckoned from that day, consequently expired on the 19th ultimo, and the question has now arisen as to whether the retention of the increased escort for a further period of six months is necessary for the protection of His Majesty's Consulate.

I am to state that, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, in view of the disturbed condition of Persia in general, and, in particular, of the departure from Shiraz of the present Governor-General, Zil-es-Sultan, who is one of the few Persian officials capable of maintaining order in the territory under his jurisdiction, it is extremely desirable that the escort should be maintained at its present strength, and I am to express the hope that the Lords Commissioners will see their way to accord their sanction to this arrangement on the same terms as on the last occasion.

I am at the same time to transmit, for their Lordships' consideration, copies of

* No. 57.

correspondence on the subject,* showing that Sir E. Grey's opinion is shared by the Secretary of State for India, the Government of India, and His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives on the spot.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23134]

No. 117.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 10, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 12th ultimo relative to the situation which has arisen in connection with the erection of buildings by your Company at Shellilieh, near Shushter, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has now received a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires regarding the present position of this question.

It appears from this report that Mr. Marling has pressed your case repeatedly and energetically on the attention of the Persian Government, but that the latter have raised difficulties regarding the title to the land on which the buildings are to stand, claiming it on behalf of Muin-et-Tujjar.

Mr. Marling adds, however, that your Company may rest assured that every effort will be made to secure a satisfactory settlement of the question with as little delay as is possible in the circumstances.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23987]

No. 118.

Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons to Foreign Office.—(Received July 11.)

Sir,

111, Portland Street, Manchester, July 10, 1908.

REFERRING again to your letter of the 3rd instant, we have the honour to and hereby give you our written assurance and guarantee that, if the Concession to work the mines of red oxide in the Island of Siri is obtained, it will be controlled by our Company in British interests. It is not intended to transfer or share it with any foreigner or any person other than our own Company and its constituent members.

We have, &c.
(For Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons),
(Signed) HUSSEIN AGHA,
Managing Director,
LAWRENCE WHITBY,
Director.

[23854]

No. 119.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 121.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, July 10, 1908

YOUR telegram No. 202.

I have received letter from the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating that the Russian officer has been attached to Russian Vice-Consulate at Nasratabad since 1904, when Captain Dankal was appointed there. In consequence of the death of that officer, Lieutenant-Colonel van der Vlaes was appointed to succeed him, and started for his post some days ago.

* Mr. Marling, No. 43, Telegraphic, February 10; to India Office, February 14; India Office, February 21; to Mr. Marling, No. 39, Telegraphic, February 26; Mr. Marling, No. 153, June 17, 1908; and *note*, Nos. 45 and 102.

[23999]

No. 120.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 210.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 11, 1908.

THIS morning Minister for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of Persian Government, and Minister of Court, on behalf of the Shah, tendered formal apology in the terms which I had approved.

Majority of the refugees will, I hope, leave the Legation in the course of the day.

A verbal message from the Shah that the terms would be strictly observed was also communicated to me by the Minister of the Court.

[24000]

No. 121.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 211.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 11, 1908.

LEGATION bastis.

The Shah has just sent me a message in which His Majesty expresses the desire, firstly, that a period of exile varying from five to ten years be fixed in the cases of six of the bastis; secondly, that four others should go to their own homes and not come back to Tehran; thirdly, His Majesty will keep a strict watch on all who leave the Legation, in order to see that they take no part in any agitation against His Majesty.

The Shah's message is, in my opinion, most unsatisfactory. With regard to the first part, I had till yesterday refused to give a list of the refugees in the Legation, fearing that if their names were known vengeance might be taken by the Shah's party on their families and property. On the 7th instant, however, an Ispahan Deputy, who left the Legation of his own accord, was received by the Shah and gave him the names of all the more important bastis. The Shah now proposes long exile for six persons, while I have been led to believe all through the negotiations that three or at most four persons would be required to go out of the country for at most six or eight months.

As regards the second part of His Majesty's message, which is a new demand, two of the persons concerned live in Karadji Dagh, the country of the unscrupulous Amir Bahadur Jung, where his authority and power is undisputed.

The bastis are as it is showing great unwillingness to leave the Legation, and if the third part of the message were communicated to them they would all decline to go.

Meftah-es-Sultani, the official of the Foreign Office who brought me the Shah's message, told me in confidence that His Majesty did not believe that His Majesty's Government seriously meant to carry out their hint that forcible measures would be taken to coerce the Persian Government.

In reply, I asked him to inform the Shah that a complete amnesty for all the bastis had been one of His Majesty's Government's demands, and that merely to give time for the present excitement to subside they had consented to His Majesty's request that three or four should leave the country for a short period. Further, I expressed my conviction that these additional conditions proposed by the Shah, one of which implied punishing some of the persons to whom an amnesty had been granted with exile, would never be agreed to by His Majesty's Government; that the Shah's message, more especially the third part, coming as it did on the assurances given by the Minister of Court this morning, and on the warning which I had conveyed in accepting the apology that our other demands must be scrupulously observed, would produce a most unfortunate impression.

As regards the first part, I venture to suggest that I be authorized to inform the Shah through the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the limit of absence from Persia will be one year; that His Majesty's Government cannot accept the second part, and that the second and third parts together constitute an excuse for nullifying the effect of the amnesty, and that His Majesty's Government will occupy a Persian port in the Gulf unless their demands are scrupulously observed.

Nothing but an explicit intimation to this effect will, I am convinced, force the Shah to carry out the promises he has made.

[24005]

No. 122.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 212.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 12, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez. Referring to my telegram No. 192 of the 4th instant.

According to telegram received from Vice-Consul situation is improving and wheat is coming into the town. In the bazaars, which are partly open, parties of infantry are posted.

Three leaders of the Nationalist party have taken bast in the French Consulate, but the ex-Governor-General has left there for Russia.

[24006]

No. 123.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 213.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 12, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN. Referring to your telegram No. 169 of yesterday.

His Majesty's Consuls at Ispahan and Shiraz have been instructed in the sense of your telegram under reply to warn Zil-es-Sultan and to advise him, unless he has the express permission of the Shah to do so, not to go to Ispahan but to leave Persia via Bushire.

As regards joint representations to the Shah, I will consult M. de Hartwig.

[24083]

No. 124.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 13.)

(No. 147. Commercial.)

Sir,

Berlin, July 9, 1908.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 88, Commercial, of the 27th ultimo, I caused inquiries to be made at various booksellers' in Berlin as to whether they had any publications, either official or non-official, in regard to German trade in Persia on sale. I was informed that the latest was an official Trade Report of 1906, which I gather is of too early a date to be of interest to your Department.

The "Vossische Zeitung," however, publishes a letter from its Tehran correspondent giving a short account of the proceedings of Herr Jung, the German Commercial Attaché at Constantinople, who was instructed last year to undertake a journey through Persia and report on the openings existing for German trade. Herr Jung began his journey in Khorassan, and thence journeyed south to Kain. From thence he traversed the desert to Yazd and Kirman, and from the latter place to Bunder Abbas, which Herr Jung considered to be the most advantageous site for an emporium for sea-borne and land-borne trade. After leaving Bunder Abbas he visited the Gulf ports, then he proceeded to Bussorah, and up the Tigris to Bagdad, whence he traversed Kurdistan to Hamadan, and eventually reached Ispahan. At the time of writing Herr Jung was in Tehran. He expressed the opinion that Persia offered valuable opportunities for German trade; but he stated that to engage successfully in commerce in Persia was a matter of difficulty, and would require a thorough knowledge of Persians and Persian conditions. From Tehran Herr Jung intended to proceed to Tabreez in order to explore Northern Persia, after which his labours would be concluded.

I am making inquiries from Sir F. Oppenheimer as to whether anything can be ascertained, confidentially or otherwise, about the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

[24233]

No. 125.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 9th instant, relative to the use of the British flag on native dhows in the Persian Gulf.

India Office, July 11, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 125.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 9, 1908.

PERSIAN Gulf: Use of British flag by dhows. Your telegram dated the 29th May.

Major Cox' Report was forwarded with weekly letter of the 25th ultimo from our Foreign Secretary to Political Secretary, India Office. We think it will be better, in the circumstances now explained, that proposed representation to German Government should for the present be deferred.

[24235]

No. 126.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 13.)

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 13, 1908.

I HAVE received a message from the Shah that His Majesty modifies his conditions in regard to the bastis.

For Takizade and a popular orator the period of absence is reduced to one and a-half years, and for three others to one year. The sixth refugee is now omitted from the list; he is, however, ready to go to Europe voluntarily.

No alteration is made in the second conditions, but with regard to the third the Shah renews assurances of his intention to fulfil his engagements.

It would nevertheless, I think, be salutary to make the intimation suggested in the last paragraph of my telegram No. 211 of yesterday.

I think, however, that in the circumstances I can continue to urge the refugees to leave the Legation, but they still show the greatest reluctance to go. Some may possibly absolutely refuse. Should I be justified in ejecting them?

Two persons have been released under No. 3 of our demands.

Serdari Mansur is to be sent to Khorassan, and Jelal-ed-Dowleh and Ala-ed-Dowleh proceed to Europe.

The persons in refuge in the French Legation have gone.

General apprehension continues in spite of these reassuring signs, and people who are under the impression that their lives are in danger are constantly saying that they wish to come to Gulahek. I am in hopes of being able to prevent them from doing this.

[24235]

No. 127.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 170.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

REFUGEES at Legation.

With reference to your telegram No. 211 of the 11th instant, and No. 214 of the 13th instant.

First point, I understand that the period of absence from the country has been adjusted in a satisfactory manner; second point, it is not possible to raise an objection to requirement that four of the refugees shall proceed to their own homes; nor to the

[24357]

No. 129*.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 173.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

PLEASE ascertain whether the Shah will be satisfied with Mr. George Barclay's appointment as Minister in the place of Sir C. Spring-Rice, who is prevented by ill-health from returning.

[1599]

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third point, the adoption of precautions to insure that "bastis" do nothing against the existing Government whilst remaining under guarantee in Persia.

It is impossible for us to ask for better terms than these. We do not wish to intervene in Persian internal affairs, and it must therefore be understood that refuge was only granted in Legation in order to save life, and not to lend assistance to any political enterprise. The protection which we have secured must be dependent on subsequent peaceable behaviour on part of refugees.

You should give the above explanation to the "bastis," but you should not employ force to oblige them to leave. I presume that when they know that these terms are final they will not remain indefinitely.

The Shah should be informed, on the other hand, that the refugees must remain unmolested in Persia as long as their behaviour continues peaceable. The facts that, if no satisfactory settlement had been arrived at, His Majesty's Government had contemplated taking naval action in the Persian Gulf, and that if there is any breach of faith as regards terms some such step will be taken by them, may be allowed to become known, though you should not let it appear that you are instructed to give publicity to the matter.

[24235]

No. 128.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 171.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

REFUGEES at Legation. With reference to your telegram No. 214 of the 13th July.

In order to provide against complications in future, would it not be possible that Legation at Tehran should be closed during the time of your absence, and that refugees should only be admitted to the Village of Gulahek, and not to the Legation there? When asylum has once been sought it is not possible for us to guarantee subsequently anything more than a safe conduct to the frontier, and protection can only be given when there is imminent danger to life. This must be clearly understood. Unless we adhere to the above limitation, leaders of any political party may, when affairs are going adversely, use our Legation as a refuge in order that when more favourable opportunity presents itself they may be enabled to renew operations. Our policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Persia would be quite incompatible with the position in which we should then be placed.

[24361]

No. 129.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 172.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

RED oxide.

Ellinger have informed us that it is undesirable to continue working Moin's Concession at Hormuz through Strick, and will place contract in Weir's hands.

They ask that the protection of His Majesty's Legation shall continue to be afforded the Moin in spite of new arrangement.

Strick's agent at Bushire telegraphs that Moin is likely to lose Hormuz, and Messrs. Strick think that the Germans will get it, or that Ellinger is selling a sub-Concession to them.

Can you ascertain facts?

[23793]

No. 130.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence relative to a proposal that Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking, an officer with the escort at Ahwaz, should be placed on duty for a period not exceeding five

[1599]

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months on his present emoluments, to assist His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that place, an arrangement which would afford increased facilities for touring.*

It will be observed that the Secretary of State for India is prepared to sanction this proposal on the understanding that the cost is equally divided between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

I am to state that in view of the reasons now adduced by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran in favour of the suggested arrangement, Sir E. Grey is disposed to approve it, and I am accordingly to express the hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury may see their way to permit the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the expense involved, which, as Mr. Marling points out, will not be considerable.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLETT.

[23114]

No. 131.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,† relative to the punishment meted out, at his instance, to the Acting Zahir of Kuis Island for causing shots to be fired on a boat flying the British flag which contained the Assistant of the British Residency Agent at Lingah.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey would propose, subject to Viscount Morley's concurrence, to approve the action taken by Mr. Marling in this matter, and to inform him that, in view of the exemplary nature of the chastisement inflicted on the offender, it is unnecessary for him to press on the Persian Government the further demand for an official apology for the violation of the British flag.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLETT.

[23793]

No. 132.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, relative to the proposal that Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking, an officer with the escort at Ahwaz, should be placed on duty for a period not exceeding five months, on his present emoluments, to assist His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that place.

I am to transmit to you herewith copies of telegrams exchanged with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires on the subject, as well as copy of a letter which Sir E. Grey has caused to be written, expressing the hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury may see their way to permit the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the cost involved by this arrangement.‡

Sir E. Grey presumes that the Government of India have already sanctioned Lieutenant Ranking's appointment to act as Vice-Consul at Ahwaz during Captain Lorimer's absence on leave next year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLETT.

* Nos. 37, 43, and 103.

† No. 18.

‡ Nos. 11, 105, and 130.

[24412]

No. 133.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 164.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 13, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I have received the following telegram No. 44, dated the 12th instant, from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw:—

"In the reply given by Taher Pasha to the Persian Commissioner's proposal the argument is reasserted that Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzeroun alludes solely to the places mentioned in Article 2 of the Treaty. It is stated clearly in this Article that these localities are laid down in the note addressed to the Persian Ambassador by the Porte. Taher asserts, again, that 'all the sanjaks of Kurdistan' belong to Turkey according to the Treaty of 1639, and that up to the beginning of the nineteenth century they remained in the possession of Turkey. It was not till then that Persia trespassed on Turkish territory, profiting by Turkey's domestic difficulties and disastrous wars to seduce the Kurds. Taher further states that the Persians deceived the mediating Commissioners as regarded the real state of affairs. There is no sign shown in the above document of any spirit of conciliation or of the possibility of arriving at a compromise, and it ends by requesting the Persian Commissioner to enter upon a discussion of the frontier delimitation question on the above lines.

"Three days ago Izzet Pasha, attended by an escort of twenty Turkish cavalry and accompanied by sixty or more armed Kurds, came from Passveh to Urumia. After much insistence on the part of the Persian Commissioner the Kurds were sent back yesterday after some demur. Taher is, however, much annoyed at this, and requests the Persian Commissioner to decide upon another meeting-place, where anybody could visit him whom he desires to see. This slight difference will, I think, pass over without further incident.

"The Turks are bringing the telegraph line to Mawana, and are building permanent barracks at that place.

"The manifesto issued by the Shah has been received here with comparative indifference. It had been telegraphed here, and copies were then printed for distribution amongst the people."

[24439]

No. 134.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 165.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 14, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

In reply to representations which the Russian Chargé d'Affaires and I made yesterday regarding the advance of Turkish troops to Cherk, reported in Mr. Wratislaw's telegram No. 43 of the 6th instant, and the construction of barracks at Mawana alluded to in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 209 of the 10th instant, the Grand Vizier stated that he had no news on either subject, but that he would make inquiries by telegraph.

He also told us that the leading Kurdish Chiefs in the vicinity of the frontier had met the Mutessarif of Hekkiari and given him a formal engagement not to stir up trouble among the Sunni Kurds in Persian territory, and to refrain from advancing across the frontier.

[24434]

No. 135.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 215.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 14, 1908.

TABREEZ situation.

I have received following telegram No. 96 from Vice-Consul at Tabreez:—

This morning Sardar Rahim Khan entered the town with 1,000 horsemen and three cannon. The revolutionaries had delivered one cannon and a few rifles to him.

previous to his entry. A band of about 100 strong, entrenched behind barricades, are opposing the Government troops who are trying to capture them. Since noon to-day the firing has continued unceasingly, and I am informed by a reliable person that unless they surrender cannon will be used. Cavalry, who have orders to prevent any one from leaving or entering the town, are guarding all the roads.

[24435]

No. 136.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 216.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

FOLLOWING is secret:—

Tehran, July 14, 1908.

A Russian newspaper correspondent, who makes use of the pseudonym of "Skith," has sent articles of a violent nature, accusing us of fomenting Republican ideas in Persia and of violating the Anglo-Russian Agreement, to the "Golos Moskwa" and "Ujui Krai." It is said that these articles were telegraphed from the private office of the Russian Legation without being censored.

I have learned above from an unprejudiced European.

[24436]

No. 137.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 14, 1908.

YESTERDAY the Shah brought back from Khorassan, where they had been imprisoned, the leaders of the roughs whom he employed in the gun square in December last. Carriages were sent to meet them by the Shah's orders.

[24437]

No. 138.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 218.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 14, 1908.

YESTERDAY about thirty of the refugees in His Majesty's Legation took their departure.

[23815]

No. 139.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 122.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 14, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of a letter from the Imperial Ottoman Bank,* requesting the protection of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran on behalf of the "Société du Tombac," together with copy of the reply which I have caused to be returned in that communication.†

I have to request you to take such steps as you properly can to assist the "Société du Tombac," in so far as its interests are identical with those of British subjects.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

* No. 112.

† No. 111.

[24006]

No. 140.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 14, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, relative to the proposed departure of the Zil-es-Sultan from Persia.*

It will be within the recollection of Viscount Morley that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg reported in his telegram No. 109 of the 1st instant a suggestion made by the Russian Government that His Majesty's Government might provide a ship to convey His Imperial Highness away from Bushire, and thus to frustrate any attempt which he might wish to make to disembark at some other Persian port.

I am to inquire whether Lord Morley would feel disposed to authorize the Government of India to assign a ship of the Indian Marine for this purpose in the event of the Zil leaving Persia.

In that case he would suggest that the Zil should be conveyed to Bombay.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23815]

No. 141.

Foreign Office to the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 14, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of the letter of the Earl of Bessborough and Lord Goschen, dated the 9th instant, requesting the protection of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran on behalf of the "Société du Tombac."

I am to inform you in reply that, the "Société du Tombac" not being a British enterprise, His Majesty's Government are precluded from extending official protection to it, but that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, with instructions to take such steps as he properly can to assist that Company, in so far as their interests are identical with those of British subjects.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[24460]

No. 142.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 15.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 8th instant, relative to the appointment of Military Attaché at Meshed.

India Office, July 14, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 142.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 8, 1908.

PLEASE refer to my telegram dated the 17th March.

In consequence of refusal of Foreign Office to share the cost of the Military Attaché at Meshed, I have suggested that the matter should be further considered, and that the Army Council should be consulted. Pending final decision as to the incidence of cost, the appointment may, in the meanwhile, be continued on the present strictly temporary footing.

[1509]

* No. 123.

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[24440]

No. 143.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 219.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1908.

MR. WRATISLAW'S telegram No. 44 and my telegram No. 209 of the 10th instant respecting the Turco-Persian frontier.

Russian Minister and I have drafted a joint note for presentation to the Persian Government, but we consider that the present is scarcely a suitable moment for addressing them in view of the recent events on the frontier, on which the representations at Constantinople appear to have had no influence whatever.

Following is confidential:—

The Turkish Military Attaché here has told me that "a powerful friend" was urging his country on, and even made a boast of it.

[24521]

No. 144.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 220.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1908.

TAONA pirates case.

Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 477 of the 9th July, 1906.

I have received a Report from His Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf that the two men concerned in the murders are alive and well, and are at present on a dhow at the pearl fisheries. These men were reported to the Legation by the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to have died two years ago.

Do you see any objection to suggestion which Resident makes, that His Majesty's ship on duty to protect the pearl fisheries should make an effort to capture these men at sea? This would, in my opinion, be the only means at our disposal for obtaining redress.

[24538]

No. 145.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 221.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1908.

TABREEZ situation.

In continuation of my telegram No. 215 of the 13th instant, His Majesty's Vice-Consul reports that number of fighting force of revolutionaries has increased, and that fighting continued yesterday.

[24546]

No. 146.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 222.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 15, 1908.

EAST night Zil-es-Sultan arrived in Ispahan. The Acting Consul-General reports that, in order to settle the accounts of the Government of Pers and to arrange his own affairs, His Imperial Highness wishes to pass a few weeks in that town. He would then travel north, avoiding Tehran, and leave the country by that route.

I think that, if Zil-es-Sultan remains at Ispahan, the restoration of tranquillity in the country will be rendered more difficult, and the Russian Minister shares this opinion. Acting Consul-General has accordingly been instructed to warn His Imperial Highness that His Majesty's Government will feel themselves under no obligation to obtain guarantees for him if he prolongs his stay, and that it would be best for him to arrange as soon as possible for his departure.

[24435]

No. 147.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 249.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 15, 1908.

PERSIA.

With reference to telegram No. 216 of the 14th instant from Tehran. Have articles indicated appeared in the press?

[23613]

No. 148.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 124.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 15, 1908.

THE Persian Chargé d'Affaires called at this Office on the 7th instant and handed to Mr. Mallet the translation of a telegram from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs asking His Majesty's Government to abate their demand that an apology should be tendered to them for the conduct of the Persian Government in causing the approaches to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran to be patrolled by troops.

This demand, said Mehdi Khan, was a very hard one in the form in which it had been made.

Mr. Mallet replied that he could inform him at once, without reference to me, that there could be no question of complying with this request, but, on the contrary, unless the demands of His Majesty's Government were complied with at once it would even become necessary to increase them.

Mehdi Khan promised to inform his Government of this answer by telegraph.

Copy of the paper left by Mehdi Khan is inclosed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

Inclosure in No. 148.

Prince Ala-es-Saltaneh to Persian Chargé d'Affaires in London.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.)

[Received July 6, 1908.]

WITH reference to the complaint of His Britannic Majesty's Legation regarding the guards in the streets, which appeared to the Chargé d'Affaires to be besieging and watching the Legation, I telegraphed to you a few days ago. I explained that it was in no way intended to besiege the Legation. As the people were agitated, and the city was under martial law, the Government was compelled to post police guards everywhere and in all thoroughfares. The Chargé d'Affaires, fearing that it was intended to surround the Legation, made a complaint. The Chief of the Cossacks was immediately asked not to post any guards in the streets in the neighbourhood of the Legation, so that there should be no cause, from near or from afar, for the Chargé d'Affaires to be uneasy. In fact, to relieve the mind of the Chargé d'Affaires, most of what he had asked was accepted, and we were perfectly confident that he had been fully satisfied, and that there would not be a renewal of discussions. Yesterday, however, a note came from the Chargé d'Affaires, in which he states that, by the instructions of his Government, he makes the five following proposals to us:—

1. To remove Cossacks and police from the neighbourhood of the Legation, and that they should not interfere with British subjects and ()*.
2. The Court Minister, on behalf of His Imperial Majesty, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Government, must go in full uniform to the town residence of the Legation and offer full apology.
3. Immediate release of all persons who lately went to or from the Legation on usual business, and who have been arrested.
4. An assurance, signed by His Imperial Majesty, to be given to the Legation guaranteeing the safety of life, property, and person of those who have taken refuge at the Legation.

* Word undecipherable.

5. Should there be, among the refugees, persons accused of crime—other than political crime, which has now been pardoned—they must be properly tried in the presence of a member of the British Legation.

The above are the proposals contained in the *Chargé d'Affaires'* note; they cause the greatest astonishment for it has never been the object of the Imperial Persian Government to besiege His Britannic Majesty's Legation. As the city was under martial law, it was compulsory to post military guards in all the quarters of the city and in all public thoroughfares. Probably if there had been no guards in different parts of the city some thousands of persons would have gathered at the Legation as they did two years ago, and how much trouble they would have caused! It is certain that His Britannic Majesty's Government would not have desired it and do not desire it. Nevertheless, in view of the proposal of His Britannic Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires*, Cossacks and gendarmes were altogether removed from those streets.

It is a source of great surprise that, with all the good-will which the Imperial Persian Government have shown in dealing with the *Chargé d'Affaires'* requests (at a time when mischief-makers are bent on causing agitation and unrest, and the Imperial Government are compelled to take measures to prevent it), and in spite of the perfect friendship and concord that exists between the two Governments, His Britannic Majesty's Legation should act so much contrary to expectation.

You will at once explain the matter fully to His Britannic Majesty's Foreign Office. The *Chargé d'Affaires* should be instructed not to press the proposals, which have really been unnecessarily made. We have accepted and carried out such proposals as the removal of Cossacks. As regards the refugees in the Legation, guarantee of life and property shall be given. As regards those that the *Chargé d'Affaires* says have been arrested when going to or from the Legation, should there be such persons who have been apprehended while going into and out of the Legation they shall also be released. But the rest of the proposals are very hard and unnecessary. You will at once approach the Foreign Office on this subject and send a telegraphic reply.

There is one thing further that I must tell you. Yesterday the Chief of the Cossacks reported that in the neighbourhoods of the Legation crowds of people are moving too much to and fro, and compared to previous days the crowd in the neighbourhood of the Legation has become larger and some have taken into the Legation cooking requisites and rice. Although His Britannic Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires* on being asked contradicted this report and said he had no knowledge of it, yet one cannot consider the report of the Chief of the Cossacks as wholly unfounded; his report is very inconsistent with the assurances given by the *Chargé d'Affaires* that no more persons would be admitted into the Legation.

In making these remarks it is not intended in any way to complain of the *Chargé d'Affaires* or to act in opposition to him. It is thought that perhaps those who supply him with reports may to a certain extent have exaggerated matters and may not have put before him the facts as they are, else the proposals made by the *Chargé d'Affaires* would not be so hard.

[24632]

No. 149.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 223.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

REFUGEES question.

Tehran, July 16, 1908.

Owing to the connivance of a Persian soldier on duty at the main gate and the momentary absence of the gholam, six men managed to enter Legation on the night of the 14th instant. It was only with great difficulty that they were persuaded to leave on the following morning.

Again a crowd of some 200 persons made a determined effort to enter the compound by a side gate last night about 8 o'clock. The other gates had been tried previously, and the intruders eventually threatened to force their way in. Though the gholams did their best to persuade them to go away, the crowd only dispersed on the arrival of some Cossacks upon the scene, who, however, did not use force. Just as the crowd was leaving the Vice-Consul arrived, and the crowd implored him to allow them to take refuge.

The risk of an invasion of the Legation by force seems to be not very remote

during the continuance of present régime; and the convocation of the Assembly at an early date is, in my opinion, the only remedy. I understand, however, that His Majesty's Government are not disposed to advocate this course at present (see your telegram No. 166 of the 8th instant).

I venture to request that you will send me instructions in regard to this.

[24655]

No. 150.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 224.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 16, 1908.

QUESTION of refuge in His Majesty's Legation.

In reply to your telegram No. 171 of the 13th July, I think that to close Legation altogether would not be practicable. The building of the new house and the considerable repairs in progress at the Minister's house would have to be stopped. The representative of the Office of Works is living in the Legation, and the Indo-European Telegraph Department and many other British subjects would be unable to get their drinking water.

Even if the Legation were closed it would be necessary to leave a caretaker and a guard of Persian soldiers. As you will observe from my telegram No. 223 of to-day, these cannot be trusted. About twenty refugees have come to Gulahak village, but in the Gulahak Legation there are no bastis.

[24661]

No. 151.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 225.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 16, 1908.

BAST question. Referring to my telegram No. 223 of to-day, I have talked over the present situation with M. de Hartwig, who would not be averse, I think, to making a joint representation to the Shah advocating that elections for the new Medjliss should be held at an early date.

I fear that M. de Hartwig is not yet convinced of the sincerity of our efforts to induce refugees to leave the Legation, though he should be persuaded by the fact that fifty-four of them have left already.

Twelve now remain, and these include the four who are to return to their homes and the six who are to leave the country. M. de Hartwig argues that nine or ten who are now absolutely declining to leave should be turned out by force. In reply I said I had not authority to do this, and that I was sure His Majesty's Government would not instruct me to follow such a course.

Personally, I am convinced that the above-indicated ten men have purely political motives for declining to leave.

[24440]

No. 152.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 176.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1907.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 219 of the 15th instant on the subject of the frontier dispute between Turkey and Persia.

Communication respecting representatives at Constantinople may be withheld as you suggest.

[1599]

[24546]

No. 153.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 177.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1908.

I approve the instructions sent by you to Acting Consul-General at Ispahan as reported in your telegram No. 222 of the 15th instant.

[24796]

No. 154.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 17.)

(No. 226.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 17, 1908.

MEFTAH-ES-SULTANEH came to see me yesterday afternoon with a message from the Shah to the effect that His Imperial Majesty had learnt that, at the instigation of the leading bastis, another attempt was to be made in the evening to force an entrance into the Legation. His Majesty asked what steps I should take to prevent this. I replied I did not think that communication was possible between the bastis and their friends outside, but that in any case every precaution would be taken to prevent an entry being effected.

Thereupon Meftah-es-Sultaneh inquired whether I should have any objection to the Legation being guarded, to which I replied that I most certainly had, and that the Persian Government must clearly understand that such action on their part would place them in the same disagreeable situation as they had been in a week ago. I added that a rush of bastis to the Legation was the last thing I wished to see, and that if between 8 and 9 in the evening (this is supposed to be the dangerous time) a Cossack patrol happened to pass near the Legation, as might happen in any other quarter of the city, I should say nothing, but that another incident would at once arise if any action beyond this were taken.

Though I am confident that Meftah-es-Sultaneh reported what I said correctly, twenty Cossacks on foot were posted about the Legation compound last night between the hours of 7 and 9, and this morning a patrol passed.

In further conversation Meftah-es-Sultaneh said that it was the earnest desire of the Shah that the refugees should leave as soon as possible, and that His Majesty was ready to give each man 30*l*, and provide carriages for the journey. In reply, I asked him to tell the Shah that I was doing my best to induce them to go, but that I could not go beyond persuasion without express instructions from my Government.

In spite of the rebuff of the night before last there is, in my opinion, a real danger that people may attempt to take bast in large numbers, and it is not improbable that such a movement may be precipitated by the departure of the refugees at present in the Legation, as, in the opinion of the people, their presence is a guarantee that His Majesty's Government will assist them in some way.

In Gulabek village there are now sixty-three refugees, most of whom have come within the last two days and are well-to-do.

Patrols of soldiers come as far as the boundaries of the village occasionally.

[24792]

No. 155.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 17.)

(No. 227.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 17, 1908.

FOLLOWING is Secret :—

Agents at Krasnovodsk and Ashkhabad have reported to Military Attaché at Meshed that before the Shah began his attack on the Medjliss he had evidently come to an agreement with Russia. Further, Russian troops were posted at various places (for

instance, Ashurada Island) on the frontier in order to be ready in case of need to make a demonstration.

In reply to my inquiry, His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed reported "Russians informed Governor-General and ourselves in this sense."

Possibly something was done in order that a moral effect might be produced.

[24661]

No. 156.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegrams Nos. 223 and 225 of the 16th instant relative to the general situation in Persia.

Your telegrams show clearly that the privilege of asylum in His Majesty's Legation is being now used not merely as a refuge in danger, but for political purposes. As a continuance of this state of affairs or its renewal in future are highly undesirable, you should let it be known generally that in future nobody whose life is not in danger will be permitted to obtain asylum in the Legation.

Without forcibly expelling those bastis whose motives in taking refuge were of a purely political nature, and who refuse to leave, you should endeavour to convince them that there is nothing more to be gained by remaining, and that they had better go.

Although the avoidance of any appearance of intervention in the internal affairs of the country is highly desirable, you may, if M. de Hartwig agrees, make a representation in a friendly way to the Shah, urging His Majesty to convoke the Assembly at an early date as one of the most certain means by which tranquillity and confidence may be restored in Persia and an end put to the inconvenience which recent events have caused to us all.

[25339]

No. 157.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 217.)

Sir.

Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.

I ASKED Count Benckendorff to come and see me to-day, and told him that I had nothing which I particularly wished to urge him to do, but that I should like to tell him, for his information, what had been passing this week at Tehran.

All the "bastis" but twelve had left our Legation. I had instructed Mr. Marling to tell these twelve that we could not ask for them any terms further than those we had already secured, and that therefore they had nothing to gain by remaining in the Legation. I had also instructed Mr. Marling to urge them to leave. It would be undesirable to expel them forcibly, and for this reason I had not told Mr. Marling to do this. But I had told him to restrict "bast" to cases in which it was necessary to save life in imminent danger, and that if people sought asylum in our Legation it must be made clear to them that we could not promise them anything beyond a safe conduct to the frontier. Unless some such restriction as this was made members of any political party might seek refuge with us when things were going badly with them, and then leave the Legation when a favourable opportunity presented itself for renewing political operations. This would be tantamount to using the British Legation as a base for political purposes, a thing which we did not wish to allow.

Mr. Marling had telegraphed to say that if the Shah would convoke the Assembly he thought this would allay apprehensions and put an end to difficulties.

I had thought of suggesting this step at St. Petersburg, but had decided not to do so at once because I doubted whether it would be opportune. To-day, however, I had heard from Mr. Marling that he thought M. Hartwig was inclined to the opinion that such a step might be advisable. I had therefore instructed him that, if M. Hartwig was of this opinion, he might join him in making a representation to the Shah that the Assembly should be convoked in the interests of general security.

I also observed to Count Benckendorff that M. Hartwig and Mr. Marling appeared to be getting on better together now.

He told me this was confirmed by the reports received from M. Hartwig. He

added privately that M. Hartwig had expressed the opinion that if Mr. Marling had been on the spot in Tehran throughout the recent events some of the incidents which had occurred would, M. Hartwig thought, have appeared to him in a different light.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[23987]

No. 158.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.*
WITH reference to your letter of the 24th ultimo, relative to the Concession which Messrs. Hajji Ali Akbar and Co. (Limited) desire to obtain from the Persian Government for the extraction of red oxide on the Island of Siri, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a list from the Company in question,* giving the guarantee which was required from them, that the Concession, if obtained, will be worked in British interests.

I am to inquire whether, in Viscount Morley's opinion, the terms of this guarantee are satisfactory.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[23647]

No. 159.

Foreign Office to War Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.*
I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence relating to the question of whether the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed should be maintained or abolished,† and to state that he would be glad to learn the opinion formed by the Army Council on the subject from the standpoint of Imperial military interests, after a consideration of these papers.

In the meantime, the Russian Government have appointed a Military Attaché in Seistan.

Lord Morley has given his opinion that the Russian Government should be requested not to give effect to this appointment. It has been pointed out, in reply, that such a request will necessarily be met with a demand for the withdrawal of the Military Attaché at Meshed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[23761]

No. 160.

Foreign Office to Messrs. Ellinger and Co.

Gentlemen, *Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo, relative to the working of the Concession held by the Mun-et-Tujjar for the extraction of red oxide in the Island of Hormuz.

I am to inform you, in reply, that, so long as this enterprise remains in British hands and so long as you continue to fulfil the conditions subject to which the support of His Majesty's Government was originally promised to you, you will continue to receive that support through His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive in due course a list of the

* No. 118.

† Sir C. Spring-Rice, No. 168, July 24; to India Office, September 7; India Office, October 2; to Sir C. Spring-Rice, No. 135, Telegraphic, October 4; Mr. Marling, No. 223, October 9, 1907; Mr. Marling, No. 7, January 21; to India Office, February 24; India Office, March 17; to Mr. Marling, No. 20, Telegraphic, April 29; Mr. Marling, No. 117, Telegraphic, May 20; to India Office, May 14, 1908; and *ibid.* No. 101.

debenture holders of the Company to be formed in order to be able to establish to his satisfaction their character and nationality, in fulfilment of the condition laid down in my letter of the 18th January last.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[24909]

No. 161.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 18.)

Sir, *India Office, July 17, 1908.*
IN reply to your letter of the 6th instant, as to the action to be taken in connection with the appointment by the Russian Government of a Military Attaché to their Consulate in Seistan, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of telegraphic correspondence with the Viceroy on the subject, from which it will be seen that the Government of India are of opinion that it will be better not to raise the question of the withdrawal of the Russian Attaché from Seistan at the risk of having to withdraw the British Attaché from Meshed.

The hearings of the question are modified by the information furnished in the telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg of the 10th instant, from which it appears that a Russian military officer has been stationed at the Seistan Consulate since 1904, and that the vacancy that has occurred in the post has been actually filled up. It is thus no longer a question of representing to the Russian Government the objections to creating a new appointment in the British "zone," but of asking them to abolish an appointment which was in existence before the conclusion of the recent Agreement concerning Persia.

In these circumstances Lord Morley is of opinion that it may be desirable to defer the question of addressing the Russian Government on the subject till a decision has been arrived at as to the continuance of the British Attachéship at Meshed, which was discussed in my letter of the 8th instant. He suggests, further, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that it would be more conformable to the spirit and purpose of the Anglo-Russian Agreement to withdraw our Military Attaché from Meshed, and for Russia to withdraw hers from Seistan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY

Inclosure in No. 161.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 2, 1908.

SEISTAN. Russian Consulate: Appointment of Military Attaché. Your telegram of the 23rd instant. We would raise no objection to Russian Attaché in Seistan, if by so doing we raised the question of appointment of Military Attaché at Meshed, to the retention of which we attach great importance. Russian Government, not improbably realizing the importance of our Attaché at Meshed, in sending a Staff Colonel to Seistan, has it in view to propose hereafter that both the Meshed and Seistan appointments should be abolished. There is little for a Russian Attaché in Seistan to do that cannot be done by Russian Consul. The last Russian Attaché in Seistan lost his health and died on his way back to Russia; it is doubtful whether man in Colonel's position would stay in Seistan for long. We think it better not to raise any objection, on consideration of all the circumstances.

[24900]

No. 162.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 18.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 15th instant, relative to the Zil-es-Sultan.

India Office, July 17, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 162.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 15, 1908.

FOREIGN OFFICE inquire whether I would authorize provision of Indian marine vessel for the conveyance from Bushire to Bombay of the Zil-es-Sultan, who is being advised by the Consul at Shiraz to leave Persia by the first-named port. I shall be glad if you will let me know without delay whether you have any objection.

[24901]

No. 163.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 18.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 17th instant, relative to the Zil-es-Sultan.

India Office, July 17, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 17, 1908.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN. Your telegram dated the 15th instant.

No objection to conveyance of Zil in Indian Marine steamer from Bushire to Bombay; on hearing from you, necessary instructions will be issued to Resident, Persian Gulf. It is assumed that, as stated in your telegram of the 3rd instant, intention is that Zil should proceed from Bombay to Europe. Objections are foreseen to his residing in this country. Earliest information, if arrangements are to be made for him at Bombay, and instructions as to how we are to treat him, are requested.

[24796]

No. 164.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 179.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 18, 1908.

BAST in Legation.

With reference to your telegram No. 226 of the 17th July.

You should, if there is reason to apprehend the taking of bast in large numbers, keep the gates of the Legation closed. You should also give publicity through the popular leaders to the fact that any attempt to use the Legation for political purposes or to force an entrance to it will be resented by His Majesty's Government.

[24993]

No. 165.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 19.)

(No. 228.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 19, 1908.

MY latest information from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez is to the effect that the Revolutionary party have gained the upper hand. Hostilities are suspended for the moment, and the local Commander-in-chief of the Shah has been compelled to withdraw from the town.

[25021]

No. 166.

Mr. O'Brien to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 308.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 5, 1908.

HAVING received your telegram No. 201 of the 2nd instant on the following morning, I called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the course of the day. I handed to his Excellency a written statement of the demands which His Majesty's Government had instructed Mr. Marling to present to the Shah in satisfaction for the disrespect offered to the British Legation. I made the explanations indicated by you in your telegram as to the motives which had guided His Majesty's Government in framing these demands, and I asked the support of the Russian Government for them. M. Isvolsky expressed his great appreciation of the regard for Russia shown by His Majesty's Government in deciding upon their demands; said that the Imperial Government would give them "unconditional support," and promised to telegraph immediately in that sense to M. de Hartwig.

In regard to the question of Russia's recent action in Persia, I stated to his Excellency that the situation created in Tehran by a Russian officer as Governor-General carrying out the Shah's measures against the Assembly and the popular party had made co-operation between the two Legations extremely difficult. His Majesty's Government had carefully refrained from making this situation a pretext for intervention on their part. They still thought the policy of non-intervention the wisest course to follow, and they could not depart from it. I must tell his Excellency frankly, however, that His Majesty's Government looked on what had occurred in Tehran with great concern. The understanding between the two Governments was that they would co-operate in Persia on the basis of non-interference in Persia's internal affairs; but it could not be denied that recent occurrences in Tehran bore the appearance of intervention on the part of Russia.

M. Isvolsky repudiated emphatically, and with considerable heat, the suggestion that Russia had departed from the policy of non-intervention. He gave me the most positive assurances that in carrying out the Shah's measures against the agitators, and in taking over control of the town (if he had done so), Colonel Liakhoff had acted neither by the orders nor with the knowledge of the Russian Government. I asked whether I might convey to you his Excellency's personal assurances to this effect; and he replied that not only might I do so but I might say further, that so far from having been privy to what Colonel Liakhoff was about to do in Tehran, he did not at the moment of speaking to me know what were the real facts in regard to the Colonel's action, whether or not he had been made Governor-General, or what his actual position was. M. Isvolsky went on to say that Colonel Liakhoff was, and had been for the last four years, in the employment of the Persian Government. He would naturally think himself bound to carry out the Shah's orders. The Cossack Brigade being the only organized force in Tehran, it was inevitable that it should play a prominent part in an emergency of this kind. It provided the only means for the maintenance of order, and also, as must not be forgotten, the only safeguard for the foreigners at Tehran and the foreign Legations. The brigade would have acted in the same way if it had been commanded by a European officer other than a Russian. Doubtless, M. Isvolsky said, it would have been in some respects preferable that its commander should not be a Russian. How far Colonel Liakhoff's action would be approved by the Russian Government was a matter which would be considered later, when the facts had been fully ascertained.

I thanked his Excellency for the assurances which he had given me with regard to the action of the Russian Government in Persia, which would, I thought, relieve the uneasiness caused to His Majesty's Government by recent events at Tehran.

With reference to the attitude of His Majesty's Legation towards the popular party, I made a statement to his Excellency in the terms indicated in your telegram, saying that His Majesty's Government could not believe that the charges of intrigue against members of the Legation were based on anything but fabrications from Persian sources. They ought not to be accepted without proof, nor allowed to disturb the good relations between the two Governments. I added that similar stories directed against the Russian Legation were received by His Majesty's Government and disregarded by them. His Excellency received my statements on these points without comment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

[25023]

No. 167.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 312.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 9, 1908.

I TOOK occasion on the 4th instant, when making a communication to M. Isvolsky regarding Persia, to point out to his Excellency that the prominent part taken recently by Colonel Liakhoff would have the result of saddling Russia in the eyes of the world with the responsibility for the Shah's violent measures. The papers at that time were full of accounts of cruelties practised on the royalist side. I said that the Russian Commander would be made answerable for these; and it would be impossible to induce people to believe but that the Colonel throughout the recent crisis was the agent of Russia. The result was embarrassing, in somewhat different ways, both to the Russian and to His Majesty's Government, and I supposed that M. Isvolsky would agree with me in thinking it desirable that Colonel Liakhoff should before long resume his duties as Instructor of the Cossack brigade. His Excellency quite agreed, but said that while affairs were in a critical state at Tehran, and the maintenance of order depended entirely on the Cossack brigade and its Commander, it would be impossible for him summarily to remove that officer from his present position. Colonel Liakhoff was in the employment of Persia, and to deprive the Shah of his services at this juncture would be a more serious sort of interference in the affairs of the country than some others that had recently been spoken of.

Yesterday the Minister for Foreign Affairs returned spontaneously to this subject. He said that Colonel Liakhoff's action in the recent crisis had been taken entirely independently of the Russian Government. It was even contrary to the standing instruction from the Imperial Government under which the Colonel took service with the Shah. M. Isvolsky was inclined to think that the Colonel could not be blamed for what he had done; he was driven to it by force of circumstances. For instance, when fire was first opened on a detachment of the Cossack brigade, the Colonel could not refuse to take command of the rest of the brigade and proceed to the scene of fighting. Nevertheless, the part which he had played was by no means agreeable to his Excellency, for he had to recognize that it placed a responsibility on the Russian Government which he had no wish to assume, and which weighed heavily on him. He had discussed the matter at length with the Chief of the General Staff, under whose orders Colonel Liakhoff was, and General Palitzine had agreed that the Colonel's prominent action was a matter for regret.

The same night, his Excellency continued, he said of the conspicuous rôle just played at Tabreez by the Russian Consul-General. There again the Consul-General had in reality exceeded his instructions, but it was difficult altogether to blame him. M. Pokhotinoff had resided many years in Tabreez, and occupied a special position there. He could not well refuse, when appealed to on all sides, to use his influence to bring about a cessation of the fighting. Fortunately, his mediation had been successful, but what if it had not? The situation at Tabreez, where there was no organized force such as the Cossack brigade, was a very critical one. His Excellency by no means shared M. de Hartwig's optimism in regard to the present outlook in Persia. M. de Hartwig reported that the Shah's victory was complete, and that the revolutionary movement was definitely crushed. M. Isvolsky felt by no means sure of it. In any case, he concluded, he relied on the harmonious action of the two Governments as providing the best means for dealing with difficulties such as he had indicated.

In speaking as above described the Minister for Foreign Affairs evidently had in his mind the danger of circumstances arising in which Russia might be forced to take some

military action in North Persia. That is a contingency which it may be said with confidence that the Russian Government is at the present moment above all anxious to avoid. M. Isvolsky fully realizes that the danger of its occurring is increased by the excessive prominence of Russian officers and Agents in North Persia, and it is satisfactory to hear that General Palitzine is of the same way of thinking. I believe the Minister of Foreign Affairs at any rate will do what lies with him to keep the activity of local Agents within bounds. At the same time it seems obvious that the circumstances of which his Excellency is so apprehensive are more likely to occur if the popular cause should triumph than while the Shah retains the upper hand. For example, if the royalists were defeated, Russian officers might lose their lives, or there might be retaliation against Russian Agents, Consular, and others. Thus Russia must necessarily desire to maintain the present Shah on the throne, not only because of the advantages which she may derive from the Prince's favourable disposition towards herself, but also because if he were defeated there would be a danger of complications forcing her to military action. It is therefore only to be expected that the Russian Government will continue to give their moral support to Mohammed Ali Shah, and their readiness to follow the policy of non-interference will be limited to that extent. I believe, however, that subject to this limitation, M. Isvolsky will be found ready and anxious to avoid unnecessary interference in Persian internal affairs. He is keenly alive to the disadvantages of Russia being made responsible for reaction in Persia, and therefore prepared to advise the Shah in a constitutional sense. As to his anxiety to co-operate with His Majesty's Government in Persia, there cannot, I think, be a doubt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

[25025]

No. 168.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 314.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 10, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 202 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that I mentioned the question of the appointment of a Russian Military Attaché in Seistan to M. Isvolsky in conversation, and at his request I wrote him a private letter to remind him of the matter. I stated that I thought there had not previously been a Russian Military Attaché at this post.

I have the honour to inclose copy of a letter received from his Excellency in reply, stating that a Russian officer has been attached to the Russian Vice-Consulate at Nasratabad since 1904, when Captain Dantal was appointed there, and that Lieutenant-Colonel van der Vlaes has now been appointed to succeed Captain Dantal, deceased.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

Inclosure in No. 168.

M. Isvolsky to Mr. O'Beirne.

Mon cher Mr. O'Beirne,

Saint-Petersbourg, le 26 Juin, 1908.

EN réponse à votre lettre d'hier, je crois devoir vous informer du fait que c'est en 1904 qu'un officier Russe a été attaché pour la première fois à notre Vice-Consulat à Nasratabad; c'est le Capitaine Dantal qui avait été choisi alors pour occuper le poste en question. Cet officier étant mort l'année dernière, il a fallu penser à le remplacer, et le choix du Ministère de la Guerre est tombé sur le Lieutenant-Colonel van der Vlaes, qui est parti pour son poste il y a quelques semaines de cela et qui doit, je suppose, arriver au Seistan un de ces jours.

Votre, &c.
(Signé) ISVOLSKY.

[24400]

No. 169.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 316.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 10, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of an official communiqué, published in the "Journal de Saint-Petersbourg" of yesterday, in regard to the action of Colonel Liakhoff during the recent events in Tehran and the part taken by the Russian Minister in this connection.

I have sent a copy of this communication to Mr. Marling.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Extrait from the "Journal de Saint-Petersbourg" of July 9, 1908.

LES ÉVÉNEMENTS DE TÉHÉRAN.

À LA fin de l'année dernière, lorsque Téhéran se vit le théâtre de la lutte, engagée entre le Medjliss et les réactionnaires, le Colonel Liakhoff, Commandant de la Brigade des Cosaques Persans, reçut l'ordre de s'abstenir strictement de toute intervention dans la lutte des partis politiques; dans le cas où des mesures d'action contre la représentation nationale deviendraient nécessaires, les officiers Russes avaient à céder leur place à des officiers Persans. Les derniers événements ont eu pour origine un complot contre la dynastie, ourdi par le Prince Zilli-Sultan, soutenu par les éléments ultra-révolutionnaires les Ardjoumehs, mais auquel le Parlement était absolument étranger. Comme la vie du Schah se trouvait menacée, le Colonel Liakhoff, en vertu des instructions générales qu'il avait reçues, ainsi que du devoir direct incombant à sa charge, devait prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires pour défendre, avec sa brigade, la personne et la famille du Schah. C'est pourquoi la garde du Palais, et l'exécution de tous les ordres du Schah en général, se réalisaient sous la direction générale du Colonel Liakhoff, en tant que Commandant d'un corps de troupes Persan.

Le 10 Juin, à Frodo, Liakhoff reçut l'ordre du Schah d'envoyer un détachement de Cosaques à pied à la Mosquée de Sipokh-Sahir, que l'on croyait être le refuge de plusieurs conspirateurs. Ce détachement, ayant à sa tête un officier Persan, reçut l'ordre de s'emparer des criminels sans recourir aux armes. Vouloir pénétrer dans la mosquée, les Cosaques Persans furent accueillis par des feux de salve tirés de la mezzanine et du bâtiment du Medjliss, situé à côté, par les affidés du Prince Zilli-Sultan et les membres des Ardjoumehs qui s'y étaient retranchés. Les Cosaques ne ripostèrent pas, mais demandèrent des renforts, en avisant la brigade de la résistance qu'ils avaient trouvée.

Ces renforts arrivèrent sous forme d'un important détachement de cavalerie et d'artillerie, dans les rangs duquel se trouvaient des officiers Russes. La fusillade des révolutionnaires devint plus nourrie; tous les chevaux de l'attelage des canons furent tués, et les révolutionnaires, réfugiés dans les bâtiments adjoints, commencèrent à lancer des bombes. La situation de la brigade, qui devait s'abstenir de toute action jusqu'à la dernière extrémité, devint critique. Se trouvant en relations constantes avec le Palais, où siégeaient les Ministres, ainsi que—fait particulièrement important au point de vue de la caractéristique de l'état de choses—la plupart des membres du Medjliss, le Colonel Liakhoff se conformait aux ordres immédiats du Schah, ne pouvant, évidemment, refuser sa collaboration; en effet, considérant que les officiers Russes ne pouvaient au service du Schah, ce refus aurait été interprété comme un acte de désertion, perpétré au moment du danger et à la face de la foule des conspirateurs contre le Schah, dont la défense incombait à la brigade.

Peu après, cependant, ayant appris l'intention du Schah de revêtir le Colonel Liakhoff des fonctions de Gouverneur-Général de Téhéran, notre Représentant à Téhéran s'empressa de déléguer au Palais un drogman, pour protester contre cette nomination. Le Schah reconnut le bien-fondé des arguments de M. Hartwig et nomma Gouverneur-Général le Prince Mazyedoud-Daoud. Quant aux forces armées mises à la disposition du Gouverneur-Général, elles furent placées sous les ordres de Liakhoff,

chargé de la police de la capitale et investi des droits de Commandant de la garnison. Ensuite, lorsque le Colonel Liakhoff, obéissant au Schah, publia, sous sa propre signature, un Règlement sur les mesures d'ordre à observer dans la capitale, le Ministre de Russie trouva nécessaire de notifier l'irrégularité de cette procédure, et de prier le Schah de remplacer le Règlement en question par un nouveau, émanant des autorités Persanes.

Il est à observer qu'après le meurtre du Schah Nasser-ed-Din, le Général Kossagovski, qui commandait la brigade à cette époque, eut à jouer un rôle identique à celui incombé actuellement au Colonel Liakhoff. Il faut constater, en outre, qu'en temps ordinaire c'est le Commandant de la brigade qui est chargé du service d'ordre dans la capitale, ainsi que de la protection des Légations, des étrangers, et de la population. Dans les derniers événements, la Brigade des Cosaques Persans a rendu des services d'autant plus appréciés, qu'elle était la seule force militaire bien organisée et disciplinée, dont le concours a permis de sauvegarder la population pacifique contre le pillage qui commençait.

[25030]

No. 170.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 320.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 12, 1908.

COMMENTS on the recent occurrences in Persia have been virtually confined, so far as the St. Petersburg press is concerned, to three papers—the Octobrist "Slovo," the "Retch," which is the organ of the Constitutional Democrats, and the advanced Liberal "Bourse Gazette." The two Liberal journals took the line which might be expected. The "Bourse Gazette" of the 7th instant complained that Colonel Liakhoff and the Russian Representative at Tehran were supporting the reaction. It pointed out that Great Britain would necessarily give her support to the cause of Liberalism, and concluded that the Anglo-Russian Convention was in danger. The "Retch" of the 10th instant criticized the official Russian version of events which had appeared on the preceding day, a translation of which was inclosed in my despatch No. 316 of the 10th instant. The "Retch" declined to accept the official defence of Colonel Liakhoff's action, observing that the Shah's life was in reality not imperilled.

The moderate "Slovo" took practically the same view as its more advanced contemporaries. Colonel Liakhoff, according to the "Slovo," should have been kept in order by M. de Hartwig. The British Legation's grievance was really not against the Shah but against Colonel Liakhoff. The action of the Russian Commander in regard to the British Legation and the support which he and the Russian Minister gave to the reaction jeopardized the Anglo-Russian Agreement in Persia.

The "Novoe Vremya" of the 7th instant published a short leading article, referring to the difficulties which had arisen between Colonel Liakhoff and the British Legation, and recommending a frank interchange of views between the British and Russian Representatives as the best means of avoiding regrettable friction. Otherwise the "Novoe Vremya" has refrained from commenting on the recent incidents at Tehran, and generally it may be said that the utterances of the St. Petersburg press on the subject, so far, have not been of a kind which would be likely to carry much weight with the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

[25012]

No. 171.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No 149. Commercial.)

Sir,

Berlin, July 13, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 147, Commercial, of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that two letters from Tehran have recently been published in the "Frankfurter Zeitung" on the subject of German trade in Persia.

The first, which is dated the 2nd ultimo, remarks that German trade is doing what it can to obtain a firm footing in Persia. It is difficult to make any headway against Russian competition in Northern Persia owing to the cost of the long

transport from the Gulf, but there is a better chance in the South where one German firm—Rob Wönekhaus & Co.—has already a firm position. But the present moment is a bad one for any hopes of extension: quantities of goods are lying at the custom-house at Tehran which the recipients cannot remove from want of necessary funds to pay the heavy duty and freight. The letter utters a warning against giving any credit in Persia—goods should only be delivered if prepaid or through a European house; it is quite impossible even for the Legation to collect debts.

The second letter, dated the 13th ultimo, remarks that not only German traders but also those of other nations are seeking to extend their business in Persia; but while the German trader merely addresses enquiries to the Legation and sends offers to merchants, the English manufacturer induces the British Consul to visit the native merchants in person, which obviously has more effect than ten letters. The writer considers it a mistake for manufacturers to address themselves direct to retail dealers, who have to suit their clients with goods of every country, with the result, he declares, that German goods come off badly. He hopes that when quiet is restored and trade is better, there will be a good market for German goods, and mentions especially cotton goods, chemicals, machinery, boots and shoes and leather goods, toys, and sugar. He adds that the manufacturers ought to start their own agencies in the more important towns and work the country systematically.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. DE SATIS.

[25062]

No. 172.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey. (Received July 20.)

(No. 391. Confidential.)
Sir,

Therapia, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting a recent visit of two Russian officers, Colonel Avéryanoff and Colonel Maximoff, to Erzeroum.

The visit of these two officers had been arranged beforehand between the Russian Government and Ottoman Government, the object of the Porte being to dispel the misunderstanding which has existed in Russia as to the military preparations on the Turkish side of the frontier.

From Mr. Shipley's despatch it would seem that Colonel Avéryanoff and Colonel Maximoff are satisfied that no extraordinary preparations are being made by the Turkish military authorities in the district in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 172.

Consul Shipley to Mr. G. Barclay.

(No. 31. Confidential.)
Sir,

Erzeroum, June 30, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report to you that Colonel Avéryanoff, commanding the Grand Duke Dimitri regiment at Tiflis, and Colonel Maximoff, of the Russian Staff, accompanied by an interpreter, who arrived here on Thursday last, the 25th instant, left Erzeroum to-day for Erzindjan, on a visit to the Mushir Zekki Pasha, by whom, I understand, great preparations have been made for their reception. Their stay at the latter place, where they will, I learn, be met by two Turkish staff officers sent specially from Constantinople, is to last about a week, after which they will return to Russia via Trebizond.

The visit of the two officers above referred to, which is looked upon by everybody as being in the nature of a special mission, has given rise to a good deal of speculation, though nothing definite seems to be known in this city as to its precise object. The opinion expressed to me by the Governor-General, Abdul Wahab Pasha, and the Commandant Ahmed Pasha, which may possibly be the true one, is that it is the outcome of a suggestion on the part of the Turkish Government that some such deputation should be sent with a view of dispelling the misunderstanding which

appears to have existed in Russia as to the extent of the alleged Turkish military preparations on this side of the frontier. If this is so, the choice of Colonel Avéryanoff would appear to have been a very suitable one, as he was formerly for some time Military Attaché at the Russian Consulate-General in this town, and is well acquainted with affairs in this part of the country. Further, the fact referred to above, of their meeting at Erzindjan two Turkish officers from Constantinople, has given rise to the supposition that the possibility of an eventual junction of the Anatolian railway system with that of Russia in the Caucasus may be made a matter of discussion, though on this subject both the Governor-General and Ahmed Pasha stated to me that they had no information whatever. I may add that, as regards Erzeroum at least, I have good reason to believe that Colonel Avéryanoff and his colleague are satisfied that no extraordinary preparations are being made by the Turkish military authorities, the former's own words to me in this connection being "il n'y a rien ici."

I need perhaps hardly say that the two officers in question were received at Erzeroum with the greatest hospitality by the Turkish authorities, both military and civil. They were the guests, during their stay, of the Commandant Ahmed Pasha. A review of the garrison was held in their honour, and an official dinner, to which the Consular Representatives were invited, was given to them by the Governor-General, the proceedings throughout being of the most cordial nature. The Mussulman part of the population, however, would seem to be not entirely free from a certain misgiving with regard to the visit, there being apparently a feeling among them that it may conceal some ulterior design of which they are being kept in ignorance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

[24994]

No. 173.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 229.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 19, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 172, I have received the following, dated respectively the 9th and 14th instant, from Bushire:—

1. "Last night, it is reported, a telegram from the Minister of Finance was received by the Governor, in which it was intimated that the Moin-ut-Tujjar's lease of Hormuz, Minab, &c., had been cancelled, and in reply the Governor stated that, with the exception of Hormuz, he could manage all lands; Hormuz should be leased by a merchant; that Brasseur, who had an interview with the Governor this morning, was recommended by the Customs; lastly, that to-day the Governor telegraphed his recommendation that Hormuz should be leased by Tigran Maleolm. There seems to be something on foot, although these reports are doubtless exaggerated.

"If Moin-ut-Tujjar's lease is cancelled, selection of Maleolm, as being Strick's agent, and a man who has long experience of oxide business, and has leased Hormuz before, would appear to be a good one from our point of view. I think the Governor of the Gulf Ports ought to control the rest of Moin-ut-Tujjar's lease—Kishm, Minab, &c."

2. "The Governor received a telegram on the 13th instant from the Minister of Finance, in which, in order to obtain offers for the lease of Hormuz, he was ordered to interview local merchants. To enable me to advise Strick's agents, I should like to know the true facts of the case and your opinion."

The Persian Government, as Moin-ut-Tujjar admits, is trying to cancel his Concession, but he states that he is able to keep it, and that assurances of our support for him had been received from you by Ellinger. He professes to have been sounded by the German Legation as to whether he would raise opposition to the Persian Government giving the lease to a German firm. His answer was that in attempting to acquire lease the Germans would lose money. I am unable to learn from him with what British firm he has contracts still running, as he was very reserved. He mentioned that he was in communication with a firm he called "Bristol," but would not give further particulars.

I am expecting His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire to send me further information.

[1599]

[25279]

No. 174.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 230.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 20, 1908.

BASTIS in Legation and Convocation of Assembly.

I called on M. de Hartwig yesterday, and communicated to him the substance of your telegram No. 178 of the 17th instant. He let me see at once that he did not believe in the sincerity of my efforts to prevent people taking refuge in Gukahiek in large numbers, and half implied that I was encouraging them to come there. My course, he said, should be to expel refugees forcibly, or prevent their reaching the village, and that to do this I could ask the Persian Government for gendarmes, as he would do in a similar case, if I had not a sufficient number of police myself. In reply, I said I felt sure that His Majesty's Government would not allow people who came peaceably to the village, made no disturbance, and were accused of no crime, to be dealt with in that way. As Russian administrative powers were greater than British he might be able to do such a thing, but I could do nothing of the kind without explicit instructions from you.

M. de Hartwig considered that a recommendation to the Shah to issue a reassuring Proclamation about convoking the Assembly would amount to inviting His Majesty to yield to pressure, and therefore he declined to agree to it. I replied that no pressure at present existed, and that I thought the step contemplated would prevent that contingency arising. It was for that very reason that I had suggested it.

M. de Hartwig seemed half convinced, but in the end refused to agree until he was assured that I had not the police powers which he believes I possess.

It might convince Russian Minister if he were informed through St. Petersburg that (as I believe I am correct in thinking) I am not to use force.

He wishes of course to produce the impression that the Shah is being supported against the Constitutionists by the two Legations.

With regard to your telegram No. 179, I am rather apprehensive of any attempt to get into communication with the leaders of the refugees, as the object of such action is so easily liable to misconstruction. The Persians are perfectly well aware of the attitude of the Legation in this matter, but I will continue to do what I can indirectly.

[25280]

No. 175.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 231.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 20, 1908.

ON Saturday afternoon one party of bastis left the Legation and the rest yesterday afternoon. They are en route for Enzeli. A Legation gholam and a representative of the Persian Foreign Office, the latter in charge, accompanied each party. The four bastis who are to return to their homes were among them, and the party numbered ten in all. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs had no money I advanced 900 tomans, which the Persian Government was to give those leaving Persia for travelling expenses.

A sowar is on duty to see that in no circumstances whatever shall any unauthorized person enter the Legation, the gates of which are now all kept closed.

[25274]

No. 176.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 232.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 20, 1908.

VICE-CONSUL at Tabreez in his telegram No. 98 reports as follows:—

"No change since yesterday in situation. The men of the infantry regiment which came from Tehran, about 800 strong, have disbanded."

[25281]

No. 177.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 233.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 20, 1908.

ACTING Consul-General at Bushire reports as follows in his telegram No. 180 of the 16th instant:—

"No inquiries have to my knowledge been made about Sirri oxide by any foreigners."

[24909]

No. 178.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 180.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 20, 1908.

WITH reference to telegram No. 121 of the 10th instant from St. Petersburg. As the appointment of a Russian Military Attaché in Seistan is not a new departure, we cannot, whilst ourselves retaining a Military Attaché at Meshed, request the Russian Government to cancel it.

We are still considering the question as to whether our Military Attaché at Meshed is to be retained or not.

[24994]

No. 179.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 181.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 20, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide.

With reference to your telegram No. 229 of yesterday's date.

At all costs the oxide business must be retained by a British firm. Your utmost endeavours should be employed to prevent its falling into the hands of foreigners.

[25384]

No. 180.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 21.)

Sir,

India Office, July 20, 1908.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant as to a proposal by the Resident in the Gulf that His Majesty's ship on duty for the protection of the pearl fisheries should endeavour to capture at sea two men known to have been concerned in the Taona murders, who are reported to be on board one of the dhows engaged in the fishing.

The case in some respects is similar to that of the recent capture of the Dayir pirates.

Attention was drawn in my letter of the 23rd August, 1906, to the obligation placed on the British Government to obtain redress for subjects of the Trucial Chiefs.

Viscount Morley is prepared to concur in Sir E. Grey's view as to the advisability of taking the action proposed, but he would suggest that, before orders are issued, Mr. Marling's views should be ascertained as to the procedure to be followed in respect of the capture and trial of the men, and the steps to be taken to avoid reasonable ground of complaint on the part of the Persian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[25411]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

REFERRING to my telegram No. 232 of the 20th instant, I received last night from Vice-Consul at Tabreez following telegram:—

"Russian Consul-General has intervened to no purpose, as I expected.

"The National party to-day delivered an attack on the Shah's party, which is defended by some three or four hundred horsemen. The revolutionaries, using cannon and bombs, have delivered a fierce onslaught. I am informed by a trustworthy eye-witness that the Anjuman Islamiéh has been occupied by the revolutionaries, who have pulled down the white flag hoisted by the clergy, and that the Government horsemen have been defeated and have withdrawn to the second line of defence.

"Acting Governor-General and the clergy are said to be in hiding."

[25421]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 131 of the 29th ultimo, with reference to Sirri oxide, Manchester firm's agent knows nothing at present of any foreign applicant, but he says that interest is being shown in Sirri by Moin-ul-Tajjar. He is willing to give guarantee asked for.

I do not see clearly in what way it is suggested that the agent should apply for the Concession. If it were granted to him, and he were to make it over to the Manchester firm, we should in effect be acknowledging Persian supremacy over Sirri by supporting that firm's rights. I propose that I inform the Persian Government officially, before we encourage the agent to apply, that no objection will be raised by us to the grant of a Concession to any applicant whom we approve, and that half royalties shall be paid by concessionnaire to Sheikh of Shargah, until the question of ownership of island is decided.

[21366]

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Brien.

(No. 215.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 21, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Constantinople, inclosing a letter from the Persian Ambassador asking for copies of certain documents relating to the Turco-Persian frontier question.

Copies of those papers which were not communicated to the Persian Envoy in 1848, together with copy of a Memorandum, prepared in the library of this Department, which sets forth the circumstances in which the correspondence in question took place, are also inclosed herewith.†

I have to request that you will inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the request of the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, and inquire whether his Excellency has any objection to the communication of these documents; should the answer be in the negative, it would appear desirable that the Representatives of Great Britain and Russia at Constantinople should make the necessary communication in concert.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

* See Part XIV, No. 311.

† Three Inclosures (2, 10 and 11) in Lord Cowley's No. 108, March 17, 1847.

*Memorandum.**

SERIOUS differences having arisen between Turkey and Persia, the Governments of Great Britain and Russia undertook to employ their good offices in bringing about an adjustment, and for this purpose nominated Commissioners to proceed to Erzeroum and to hold conferences with the Commissioners of the two Mahomedan States. This Joint Commission eventually drew up a draft Preliminary Treaty.

The Porte would not authorize its Representative at Erzeroum to sign the nine Articles of the Treaty until it had received explanations and assurances from the mediating Ambassadors as to the meaning of certain passages therein, and at the same time distinctly declared that unless these explanations were accepted by the Court of Persia they would be unable to ratify the Treaty.

The Representatives gave the explanations required by the Porte, and the Treaty was signed.

Lord Cowley, His Majesty's Minister at Constantinople, called attention in August 1847 to the fact that, although Mirza Mohammed Ali Khan, the Persian Ambassador to the French Court, had been ordered to ratify the Treaty of Erzeroum on his passage through Constantinople, the Persian Government had not consented to give the assurances required by the Porte.

Mirza Mohammed arrived at Constantinople at the end of July 1847. The Persian ratifications had not yet arrived, and the mediating Ambassadors learnt to their surprise that it was his (the Mirza's) intention not to await the arrival of the ratifications beyond a few days, but to proceed to Paris shortly. The Mirza stated that his original orders were to proceed to Constantinople to ratify the Treaty, but that on arrival at Trebizond he had received a letter ordering him not to stay more than fifteen days at Constantinople. A courier soon after appeared with renewed orders to the same effect, which Mirza Mohammed was not to disobey under pain of strangulation.

It was therefore impossible for the British and Russian Representatives at Constantinople to induce the Persian Envoy to await the arrival of the Persian ratification indefinitely.

This had not arrived by the time Mirza Mohammed had left for Paris, whither he had been sent on a complimentary mission. Colonel Sheil, His Majesty's Representative at Tehran, and his Russian colleague strongly remonstrated with the Persian Government at the obstacles they were placing in the way of an exchange of ratifications. Mirza Mohammed (no doubt as the result of these representations) was directed to return to Constantinople, where he arrived in December 1847. The Persian ratification arrived in February 1848.

The negotiations were again threatened with miscarriage, owing to the fact that, while Persia insisted on an exchange of ratifications without any further discussion, the Porte continued to declare that an explicit acceptance by Persia of the explanations which had been given by the mediating Representatives was a *sine quâ non* to a ratification on its (the Porte's) part.

The assurances which the mediating Representatives had given to the Porte as to the meaning of certain Articles in the Treaty were in connection with the following points:—

1. Surrender to Persia of the town and anchorage at Molemmurah and the Island of Khyzr.
2. Sovereignty of districts partially occupied by Persian refugee tribes on Turkish soil.
3. Claims between Government and Government.
4. Question of fortifications and question as to reciprocity as regarded the treatment of pilgrims, Consular officers, &c.

Lord Cowley's No. 41 of the 2nd February, 1848, describes at length the efforts made by himself and his Russian colleague to induce Mirza Mohammed to give his adhesion to the explanations required by the Porte.

After considerable pressure, alleging the while the absence of instructions from his Government, the Mirza was induced to give this adhesion, which he did in the form of a note to the address of the mediating Representatives, but he stipulated that they should, in their turn, give him an assurance in writing that the condition relating to

[25411]

No. 181.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 234.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

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"The National party to-day delivered an attack on the Shah's party, which is defended by some three or four hundred horsemen. The revolutionaries, using cannon and bombs, have delivered a fierce onslaught. I am informed by a trustworthy eye-witness that the Anjuman Islami has been occupied by the revolutionaries, who have pulled down the white flag hoisted by the clergy, and that the Government horsemen have been defeated and have withdrawn to the second line of defence.

"Acting Governor-General and the clergy are said to be in hiding."

[25421]

No. 182.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

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[21366]

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(No. 215.)

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I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

* See Part XIV, No. 211.

† Three inclosures (9, 10 and 11) in Lord Cowley's No. 108, March 17, 1847.

Inclosure in No. 183.

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The Porte would not authorize its Representative at Erzeroum to sign the nine Articles of the Treaty until it had received explanations and assurances from the mediating Ambassadors as to the meaning of certain passages therein, and at the same time distinctly declared that unless these explanations were accepted by the Court of Persia they would be unable to ratify the Treaty.

The Representatives gave the explanations required by the Porte, and the Treaty was signed.

Lord Cowley, His Majesty's Minister at Constantinople, called attention in August 1847 to the fact that, although Mirza Mohammed Ali Khan, the Persian Ambassador to the French Court, had been ordered to ratify the Treaty of Erzeroum on his passage through Constantinople, the Persian Government had not consented to give the assurances required by the Porte.

Mirza Mohammed arrived at Constantinople at the end of July 1847. The Persian ratifications had not yet arrived, and the mediating Ambassadors learnt to their surprise that it was his (the Mirza's) intention not to await the arrival of the ratifications beyond a few days, but to proceed to Paris shortly. The Mirza stated that his original orders were to proceed to Constantinople to ratify the Treaty, but that on arrival at Trebizond he had received a letter ordering him not to stay more than fifteen days at Constantinople. A courier soon after appeared with renewed orders to the same effect, which Mirza Mohammed was not to disobey under pain of strangulation.

It was therefore impossible for the British and Russian Representatives at Constantinople to induce the Persian Envoy to await the arrival of the Persian ratification indefinitely.

This had not arrived by the time Mirza Mohammed had left for Paris, whither he had been sent on a complimentary mission. Colonel Sheil, His Majesty's Representative at Tehran, and his Russian colleague strongly remonstrated with the Persian Government at the obstacles they were placing in the way of an exchange of ratifications. Mirza Mohammed (no doubt as the result of these representations) was directed to return to Constantinople, where he arrived in December 1847. The Persian ratification arrived in February 1848.

The negotiations were again threatened with miscarriage, owing to the fact that, while Persia insisted on an exchange of ratifications without any further discussion, the Porte continued to declare that an explicit acceptance by Persia of the explanations which had been given by the mediating Representatives was a *sine quâ non* to a ratification on its (the Porte's) part.

The assurances which the mediating Representatives had given to the Porte as to the meaning of certain Articles in the Treaty were in connection with the following points:—

1. Surrender to Persia of the town and anchorage at Mohammerah and the Island of Khyze.
2. Sovereignty of districts partially occupied by Persian refugee tribes on Turkish soil.
3. Claims between Government and Government.
4. Question of fortifications and question as to reciprocity as regarded the treatment of pilgrims, Consular officers, &c.

Lord Cowley's No. 41 of the 2nd February, 1848, describes at length the efforts made by himself and his Russian colleague to induce Mirza Mohammed to give his adhesion to the explanations required by the Porte.

After considerable pressure, alleging the while the absence of instructions from his Government, the Mirza was induced to give this adhesion, which he did in the form of a note to the address of the mediating Representatives, but he stipulated that they should, in their turn, give him an assurance in writing that the condition relating to

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fortifications did not involve the destruction of those of the town of Mohammerah, which was done.

It was pointed out to Lord Cowley in Foreign Office No. 38 of the 15th March, 1848, that it was possible that Mirza Mohammed had secret instructions to accede if necessary to the explanations required of him, but that it was obvious that he would not have done so if he had not been so hard and so judiciously pressed by the French and Russian Representatives.

But the Porte hesitated to receive the official note of the Persian Ambassador as a sufficient voucher for the adhesion of the Persian Government, and still required more explicit assurances. Lord Cowley inclosed in his No. 108 of the 17th March, 1848, a draft Act communicated confidentially to himself and his Russian colleague. The Porte required the signature of the Persian Envoy to be appended to this document.

It embodied the explanations already given to the Porte, but in the form almost of a separate Treaty. Lord Cowley said that, as both he and his Russian colleague were convinced that Mirza Mohammed would never be induced to sign it, they had addressed a joint note, accompanied by a confidential communication (of which he inclosed copies) to Aali Pasha (the Turkish Foreign Minister), who, on receiving them, engaged to obtain the consent of the Council and of the Sultan to the immediate exchange of ratifications. The first of these notes repeats the assurances in a solemn form already given by the Russian and British Representatives, and the second one maintains that they had the right to expect the Porte to be satisfied with what had been done, and to proceed to ratification.

As regards the documents of which the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople desires to be furnished with copies, the only doubt seems to be whether copies of the inclosures in this last despatch of Lord Cowley should be furnished.

(Signed) NICHOLAS BALL.

Foreign Office, July 17, 1908.

[13232]

No. 184.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 128. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 21, 1908.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 157 of the 17th ultimo, forwarding a Memorandum drawn up by Mr. Loraine, discussing the suggestions put forward by Mr. Rees, M.P., as to the best means of safeguarding and developing British interests in Western Persia, in view of the situation created by the Anglo-Russian Convention, and offering certain observations of his own on the subject.

I have to thank you for this most interesting despatch and to request you to convey to Mr. Loraine an expression of my appreciation of the industry and ability which he has displayed in the preparation of the valuable Memorandum which is inclosed in it.

With respect to the proposed construction of a railway from Tehran to Mohammera, which, as you observe, might encounter opposition from the Russian Government, I have to inform you that this question formed the subject of conversation between Sir C. Hardinge and the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs during the recent visit of the King to the Emperor of Russia at Reval.

Sir C. Hardinge informed M. Isvolsky on that occasion that His Majesty's Government would approve of a line passing through Persia and ending in the Gulf at Mohammera, and pointed out the advantages of this route from a Russian point of view.

His Excellency studied the proposed route on the map with evident interest, and observed that, although it would have the undoubted advantage of neutralizing the Bagdad Railway, he feared that it would be economically disadvantageous to Russia, as it would facilitate the competition of foreign seaborne trade with that of Russian goods brought by rail.

Sir C. Hardinge having observed that such would be the effect of all railways whithersoever they might lead, his Excellency said that the matter was one which would require careful study and that he would inform me later of his views.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[23132]

No. 185.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 21, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 4th ultimo, relative to the safeguard and development of British interests in Persia in the situation created by the Anglo-Russian Convention, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, containing certain suggestions as to the steps which it would be desirable to take with this object, together with copy of the reply which he has returned to that communication.*

I am to state that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive any observations which Viscount Morley may have to offer on Mr. Marling's report.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[25481]

No. 186.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received July 22.)

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, July 21, 1908.

IN the circumstances explained in Mr. Mallet's letter of the 10th instant, I am to say, for the information of Secretary Sir Edward Grey, that, in view of the present disturbed condition of Persia, the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury agree that the Consular guard at Shiraz may be maintained at its present strength for a further period not exceeding six months from the 19th ultimo.

I am to add that their Lordships assent to this proposal as a purely temporary measure; the information before them does not suggest that any permanent increase in the guard would be justified.

I am, &c.
(Signed) G. H. MURRAY.

[25422]

No. 187.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 236.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 18 of yesterday on the subject of Hormuz oxide, it is difficult to know, from the information I have, what measures to adopt here. I should be justified in believing, from certain indications, that Moin-ut-Tujjar, in order to get his Concession confirmed, desires to assure himself of our support, but that he may come to terms with the Germans when once he has acquired it. This view appears to be confirmed by his apparent desire to break with Strick.

To support Malcolm, on the other hand, seems risky, until we know what prospects he has of success, for as such a course would permanently alienate Moin-ut-Tujjar, who has already been found in two or three cases to be opposed to us (compare my despatch No. 66 of the 24th March last).

I have called for the opinion of His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire, and for information, but could you in the meantime answer the following questions:—

1. Have we given, through Messrs. Ellinger, assurances of our support to Moin-ut-Tujjar?
2. Are Messrs. Ellinger convinced that Moin-ut-Tujjar is dealing honestly with them?
3. What is the present state of negotiations for the formation of an Ellinger-Moin Oxide Company?
4. What is Ellinger's reason for wishing Weir to replace Strick?

On these points Moin-ut-Tujjar refuses information, and any move seems dangerous until he shows his hand.

I have received to-day the following report from Bushire:—

"It seems to me very probable that Moin-ut-Tujjar's confidence is a pretence. Strick to-day authorized Maleolm to bid for Concession; but to make bid to Governor, who is Moin-ut-Tujjar's creature, and likely to play double, is not much use."

Your telegram No. 181 had not then, however, reached His Majesty's Acting Consul-General. "Bristol," he thinks, may refer to an independent and impecunious French commercial traveller named Brasseur.

[25423]

No. 188.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 237.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

DURING the past month the expenses of the Shah in paying troops, &c., have been very heavy. Men are being actively recruited in order to augment the Cossack Brigade, and this, together with a large sum payable on a consignment of rifles, &c., from Creusot, recently landed at Enzeli, will yet further increase His Majesty's expenditure.

It is commonly reported that he is borrowing on the security of jewels from the Russian Bank, but I have no confirmation of this (see my telegram No. 243 of the 7th November last). He is also squeezing the wealthier men who took part in the constitutional movement.

It is possible that he may try, if these sources fail, to raise money on the security of the surplus of Southern customs, and I would propose, in these circumstances, if you agree, to use the authority conveyed to me in your telegram No. 98 of the 4th May last, and address a note to the Persian Government as therein indicated, keeping the Russian Minister informed of my action.

Mr. Hawkins, the London Director of the Imperial Bank of Persia, who is now in Tehran, is anxious to get the signature of the Minister of Finance to Shoa-es-Sultaneh's debt to the bank, and would be glad if the step which I propose could be delayed a short time, as it might prejudice his chances of obtaining it.

The Persian Government show a marked disinclination to transfer to the customs receipts of Bushire the lien which the Imperial Bank holds on those of Kermanshah.

[25461]

No. 189.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 238.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

FOLLOWING is secret:—

The Cossack Brigade is being largely increased, and the arms recently arrived from France have been handed over to them. They consist of 48 Creusot guns (new pattern) and 12,000 Lebel rifles. The Maxim battery of four guns, two of which are out of order, have also been given to them.

The situation at Tabreez is probably the cause of these preparations.

[25490]

No. 190.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 239.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 22, 1908.

I HAVE been informed very confidentially by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Financial Adviser is about to be asked to draw up proposals for a loan. Ala-es-Sultaneh could not tell me the proposed amount.

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No. 191.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 240.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 21, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 234 of to-day's date respecting the situation in Tabreez, the Vice-Consul reports that fighting still continues, but it appears that revolutionary party have received a check at the hands of the Shah's party.

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No. 192.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 182.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 22, 1908.

PERSIAN finance

The proposal contained in the third paragraph of your telegram No. 237 of the 21st instant is agreed to.

[25422]

No. 193.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 183.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 22, 1908.

IN reply to the questions concerning red oxide at Hormuz, contained in your telegram No. 236 of the 21st instant.

1. The assurances of support in the letter of the 18th January to Ellinger are the only ones which have been given in connection with contract. Our support is thereby only guaranteed to British interests which may be involved in any contract made between British investors and Moin under his Concession. If an attempt is made to cancel Moin's Concession, his position should undoubtedly be strengthened by these assurances. According to Ellinger, their nature has not been communicated to Moin. They and their bearing on the case should be explained to the latter at your discretion.

2. Confidence is expressed by Ellinger that he will in any case be retained as agent to Moin. He would not be thereby precluded from negotiating a deal with the Germans, but, though he admits that some danger exists, he assures us that no serious negotiations are in progress with the latter as far as his knowledge extends.

3. Negotiations for formation of Ellinger Moin Oxide Company are now at a standstill, but efforts to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion are being made.

4. Ellinger's offers either to provide freight or to join the Company have so far been refused by Strick.

Efforts to induce Strick to co-operate in forming Company with Ellinger are in progress.

We hear from latter that arrangements for direct sale of this year's oxide output have been made.

[25625]

No. 194.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 23.)

Sir,

India Office, July 22, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 20th May last, as to the wish of the Sheikh of Mohammerah and of the Bakhtiari Khans for closer relations with Great Britain, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of telegraphic correspondence with the Government of India on the subject.

As regards the Bakhtiari Khans, Lord Morley concurs in the view of the Government of India that it would be undesirable at present to give the Khans any assurances beyond an expression of friendly sympathy as proposed in your letter.

As regards the Sheikh of Mohammerah, Lord Morley doubts whether it would enhance the force of the assurances proposed by Sir E. Grey if the words suggested by

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the Resident in the Gulf and the Government of India were added. But His Majesty's Consul might be instructed to approach the Sheikh, when the assurances are formally given, on the lines suggested by the Resident, with a view to obtaining an undertaking on behalf of himself and his successors that he will consult us privately before committing himself to engagements to foreign Powers or their subjects.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 194.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

June 12, 1908.

PLEASE see despatch No. 97 from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran and his telegram No. 57 to you, regarding the Bakhtiari Khans and Mohammerah. It is proposed that the general assurances already given should be repeated to the Sheikh and that he should be informed that they will be regarded as binding in respect of his successors. Please see despatches of the 5th December, 1902, and the 29th December, 1903, from Sir A. Hardinge. This should suffice as regards external aggression, coupled with a statement that an infringement of Persian integrity, which His Majesty's Government is pledged to maintain, would be involved by such aggression. I should be glad to learn your views as to the terms, if any, in which our former assurance could safely be strengthened, in respect of encroachments by the Tehran Government on the Sheikh's present autonomous status. Having regard to recent unsatisfactory behaviour of Bakhtiari Khans towards British enterprise in their territory, it is thought that they would be likely to use any engagement beyond assurance of friendly sympathy for the purpose of creating difficulties between the Persian Government and ourselves. Your views on the whole subject are requested.

Inclosure 2 in No. 194.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 10, 1908.

YOUR telegram dated the 12th June. Relations with Bakhtiari and Mohammerah. Resident, Persian Gulf, whom we consulted, replied from Shiraz on the 4th instant, as follows, to a telegram from us of 16th ultimo:—

"Communication proposed in Secretary of State's telegram seems to be sufficient as regards protection of Mohammerah against aggression from without. In respect to maintenance of Sheikh's present status, I would suggest that he might be reminded of the close, sympathetic relations that have existed in the past between the British and himself, and that an intimation might be made to him that we shall continue to regard maintenance of the property and present status of himself and his successors as important in our own interests, so long as they adhere to the spirit of our historical relations and show themselves ready to promote the legitimate interests of British commerce and enterprise in the sphere of their jurisdiction, and that Sheikh may therefore rest in the assurance that, so far as is compatible with strict loyalty to the Persian Government on their part and with our engagements to respect Persian integrity, we shall be disposed to give him and his successors all possible support. I would add, if possible, that we should ask Sheikh, in return for above assurance, to give an undertaking on behalf of himself and his successors that before committing themselves to foreign Powers or nations in connection with Concessions, loans, or other engagements, they will take private friendly counsel with ourselves. I will send on, as soon as received, any special suggestions from Consul at Mohammerah, should he make any.

"I have been waiting to communicate with Captain Lorimer in regard to the Bakhtiari. The proposals as to tribal levies mooted in 1904 will not, in his opinion, be practicable under any conditions compatible with our engagement to respect Persian integrity or with Bakhtiari's present status, and, as he believes complete independence to be the aim of the Khans, he anticipates that they would frequently make, for purposes of their own, appeals to any definite undertaking or agreement into which we might enter. I concur so far as concerns any definite pledge; we have now to consider, however, that the importance to us of strengthening our own position in the region in question, and of keeping at a distance the influence and enterprise of other Powers, is

greatly emphasized by the apparently bright prospects of the oil industry, and the possibility of profitable irrigation. I see no reason, in these circumstances, why an oral assurance on the lines suggested above in the case of the Sheikh of Mohammerah should not be made to the Khans, with the addition of a warning that we were not concerned with the family dissensions of individual Khans, and that assurance applied only to duly constituted representatives of the Bakhtiari tribes. Such an assurance does not appear to conflict with terms of Anglo-Russian Convention."

As regards Bakhtiari, we do not think it would be safe to enter into negotiations with the Khans, and are opposed to giving the oral assurances which Major Cox suggests. In regard to Mohammerah, we agree with his views.

[25607]

No. 195.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 23.)

Sir,

India Office, July 22, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 13th instant, as to the punishment inflicted, at the instance of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, on the Acting Zabit of Kais Island for an outrage on the British flag, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the proposal of Secretary Sir E. Grey to approve Mr. Marling's action, and not to press the Persian Government further in connection with the incident.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[25548]

No. 196.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 18th instant, relative to the Shiraz escort.

India Office, July 22, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 196.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 18, 1908.

SHIRAZ escort.

Your telegram dated the 2nd July.

Proposed retention is agreed to by Foreign Office, and sanction of Treasury is being solicited. Foreign Office further recommend that, as proposed in despatch of the 17th ultimo from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, a small number of spare ribs should be kept at the Consulate. Please let me know what you propose as to the number to be supplied and the manner in which they should be sent up.

[25547]

No. 197.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 18th instant, relative to the Zil-es-Sultan.

India Office, July 22, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 197.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 18, 1908.

If you have not already done so, please repeat to Tehran my telegram of the 15th and your reply of the 17th instant regarding Zil-es-Sultan.

[25629]

No. 198.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 125.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 23, 1908.

IN the course of a conversation which I had yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, his Excellency mentioned that events at Tabreez were causing him great anxiety. It was true, he said, that the crowd had abstained from attacking foreigners, and that as yet the Russian Consul-General had not been molested, but there was no guarantee against some such thing occurring. His Excellency also alluded to the heavy losses which the state of anarchy was occasioning to Russian trade, and said that it might become unavoidable for Russia to intervene, although she did not wish to take such a step. In reply to a suggestion which I made to the effect that the Russian Consul-General had rendered himself too prominent, his Excellency maintained that that official had merely played the part of mediator. I then reminded his Excellency that both Governments had recently declared that they adhered to the policy of non-intervention, and said that Russian intervention would be very unfortunate. His Excellency assured me once more that Russia had no wish to intervene, and that she would not do so, unless such a step were rendered unavoidable by circumstances. He expressed the hope that this course would not be necessary, and said that in any case Russia would not act without previous consultation with His Majesty's Government.

[25384]

No. 199.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 184.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 23, 1908.

TAONA murders.

With reference to your telegram No. 220 of the 15th July:

I agree to the course of action which has been suggested for the capture of the murderers by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire. I should be glad, however, before the necessary orders are issued, to hear what is your view regarding the method of procedure which should be followed in respect of their trial and capture, and as to what steps should be adopted in order to avoid giving the Persian Government any reasonable ground of complaint on account of our action.

[25481]

No. 200.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 185.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 23, 1908.

SUTRAZ Consular guard

With reference to your telegram No. 193 of the 5th instant.

Guard may be maintained at its present strength for additional period of six months, to date from the 19th ultimo, as a temporary measure.

[25686]

No. 201.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 24.)

Sir,

India Office, July 22, 1908.

IN continuation of previous correspondence as to the use of the German flag by native dhows at Lingah, ending with the telegram from the Viceroy of the 9th instant, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of the correspondence referred to in that telegram.

In view of the Viceroy's recommendation and the facts reported by the Resident in the Gulf, Lord Morley is of opinion that no action should be taken to challenge the right of the dhows in question to fly the German flag till the Government of India report, as presumably they will in due course, that the use of the British flag by native dhows has been regularized.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 201.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Sindia, June 3, 1908.

LINGAH dhows flying German flag: Your telegram 9th May.
Secretary of State telegraphs 29th May:—

"No action will be taken here till receipt of Report promised by Major Cox."

Inclosure 2 in No. 201.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, June 7, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to refer to the correspondence ending with the Foreign Department telegram cited in the margin* on the subject of the Lingah dhows flying German flags.

2. The results of my inquiries from our several agencies in the Gulf show that there are very few dhows flying the British flag at all, and that there is no reason to suppose that the flag is being flown fraudulently or is being used by vessels which would not be entitled to certificates were their owners to take the trouble to get them or to renew those in possession; but there appear to be a few cases in which British subjects fly the flag without first obtaining certificates or fail to renew them regularly.

For instance—

(1.) From Bahrein it is reported that two Mahomedan British subjects at present away in India possess dhows in Bahrein for which they have not yet taken out certificate, and are said to be in the habit of carrying and occasionally flying the British flag thereon.

(2.) Again, Bunder Abbas reports that one Khoja British subject has been flying the flag on the strength of a time-expired certificate; and that the British coal agent at Bassidu, who keeps a small dhow which he sends to and fro to the mainland for provisions, &c., as well as for hire, flies the British flag on it.

(3.) Lingah reports that Hassan Ali Samaiyeh, the Abu Musa concessionnaire, who is also agent for the Bombay Persian Steam Navigation Company's steamers plying regularly from Bombay to the Gulf, has been in the habit of flying the British flag on his boats when visiting the said steamers as agent, and also when forwarding items of their cargo to the tracial coast.

(4.) Lastly, it is believed that one or two Khoja British subjects on the Mekran ports (Charbar, Gwetter or Gwador) fly the flag on their dhows without troubling to take out certificates. These particular cases are being looked into, and I have directed the out-agencies to take steps to remind British subjects within their jurisdiction both individually and generally of the necessity of close adherence to the rules regulating the

* Dated June 3, giving cover to Secretary of State's telegram of May 29, 1908.

use of the flag. I have also requested the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division, to arrange for the subsidized ships when cruising in these waters to take opportunities of examining the papers of any native craft met with under the British flag which are clearly not Indian and see that they are in order.

3. It seems probable that the German firm were emboldened to give flags to the three dhows employed by them, by the proceedings of their associate, Hassan Samaiyeh, in flying the Union Jack without authority.

Government will, no doubt, decide whether the action now taken to put our house in order warrants our moving at an early date in the matter of these German flags, or whether it would be better to wait for a time before taking that step.

[25758]

No. 202.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 126.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 24, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez. My telegram No. 125 of the 23rd instant.

In a conversation which I had this morning with Minister for Foreign Affairs I reverted to the question of the possibility of Russia taking action in Persia. M. Isvolsky gave me an assurance that Russia's intentions (as previously expressed to His Majesty's Government) had in no way changed, and that to intervene was the last thing which the Imperial Government desired. He added that he had merely wished, in our conversation of the 22nd instant, to express his apprehensions that circumstances might arise in which intervention could not be avoided.

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No. 203.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 211.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 24, 1908.

VICE-CONSUL at Tabreez reported yesterday in telegram No. 101 that the day before all wires in the royalist quarter were cut.

A great effort was made by the devotees, and they can still hold out. Cannon was used by both sides, and the Government horsemen plundered and committed atrocities. It is said that the casualties amount to about 200.

Unless negotiations for peace are guaranteed by the Consular Body, before whom they must be discussed, the population has declared that it will not treat.

There was no firing this morning, and none of the clergy have left the town.

[25744]

No. 204.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 212.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 24, 1908.

I HAVE been told very confidentially by the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires that the Minister for Foreign Affairs' Private Secretary informed him that Germany had received an appeal from the Persian Government for assistance in the Turco-Persian frontier question.

I may be able in a day or two to verify this, and I will keep you informed.

[25759]

No. 205.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 213.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 24, 1908.

M. BIZOT informs me that the Persian Government are in the utmost straits for money. He states that a loan is necessary similar to that contemplated in 1906, but that, in order to prevent its being embezzled by the Shah's entourage, it will be

necessary to attach very stringent conditions to the grant of such a loan guaranteeing its proper employment.

M. Bizot thinks, however, that the Shah and his Ministers would consent to any terms, so urgent is their need, and that in this way the opportunity might be taken to arrange that the Ministry of Finance shall be reorganized. With regard to the repayment of the advance, he suggests that it could be made a first charge on a larger loan, which would be negotiated after the Parliament had met. The two Legations would beforehand approve the purposes for which the advance would be used.

M. Bizot, M. de Hartwig, and I will meet on Monday to discuss these proposals.

Unless some advance is made by us to the Shah, M. de Hartwig fears that the courtiers may persuade His Majesty to borrow from private German banks at exorbitant interest, and that the money so obtained would be squandered recklessly.

[25737]

No. 206.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 188.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 24, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide.

With reference to my telegram No. 183 of the 23rd July.

Provided control by a British firm is secured, it does not matter to us who obtains the Concession or contract under the Concession. Until British interests are directly involved by conclusion of a contract with a British firm, our assurances to Ellinger do not come into force. We are making inquiry of the latter as to what contracts he has entered into.

Strick has informed us that, if Moin's Concession is cancelled, he intends to apply for Concession through his agents at Tehran, or, if Moin's Concession remains in force, for a contract under that Concession whereby he will obtain control of supply of oxide for a term of years. To procure this he is prepared to pay capital sum down.

[24909]

No. 207.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 24, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, relative to the appointment by the Russian Government of a Military Attaché to their Consulate in Seistan.

I am to inform you in reply that Sir E. Grey concurs in the opinion expressed by Viscount Morley that, in the circumstances of the case, it is desirable to defer the settlement of the question of addressing the Russian Government on the subject till a decision has been arrived at as to the maintenance of the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey entirely shares Lord Morley's view that it would be more in conformity with the spirit and purpose of the Anglo-Russian Convention if both of these Attachés were withdrawn by their respective Governments.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. A. CAMPBELL.

[25768]

No. 208.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 103.)

Sir,

Stockholm, July 21, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 57 of the 9th instant transmitting correspondence relative to the Consular representation of foreign Powers at Bushire. To-day is the usual day of the week fixed for the reception of the Diplomatic Corps by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, but his Excellency is away. I took an opportunity, however, in accordance with the instructions contained in your above-mentioned despatch, of intimating to the Secretary-

General of the Foreign Office that, should the Swedish Government at any time desire to appoint a Consular Representative at the port of Bushire, the selection of a British subject in that capacity would be agreeable to His Majesty's Government in view of their special position in the Persian Gulf.

Baron Ramel assured me that he would make a note of the intimation for the information of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in case the Swedish Government should at any time think of appointing a Consular Representative, and observed that in most places where Swedish subjects were not available the Swedish Government usually did appoint British subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT G. DERING.

[25760]

No. 200.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 244.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 24, 1908.

A COMPLAINT of bad working of the Ahwaz-Borasjan telegraph line has been made by the Persian Minister of Telegraphs to the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and a hint has been thrown out that the Department might undertake repair of the line. The cause of this is probably the Dutch Minister's recent complaints.

This opportunity might possibly be turned to advantage for obtaining control of the line, and possibly even for the Mohammerah extension.

Could not the Indo-European Telegraph Department here receive from London rather full powers to negotiate with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs? The matter had, in my opinion, better be settled without intervention of His Majesty's Legation.

His Majesty's Government and the Government of India would, I presume, be prepared to bear some expense supposing we are able to arrange for a satisfactory measure of control.

I venture to ask for an early reply, as circumstances are not likely to continue so favourable for long.

[25893]

No. 210.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 245.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 25, 1908.

VITE-CONSUL at Tabreez, in telegram No. 102, dated yesterday, reports following:—

"This afternoon brisk firing was maintained, and cannon shots fired. Nine-inch mortars, which cause great damage to houses, are being fired by Government party.

"The position of Christians in their quarter will be unbearable if the Citadel, from which the revolutionaries are firing cannon, is attacked.

"The Armenian Archbishop has telegraphed to the Shah, and the most important merchants are demanding the restoration of order in a telegram to His Imperial Majesty, which they are sending through the Legations.

"It is high time that the Shah should take proper measures to quell the disorders."

The merchants' telegram to the Shah was sent through the Prime Minister, and it would appear that, if the tribal cavalry are acting under the orders of the Shah, the merchants wish to leave in a body.

[25894]

No. 211.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 246.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 25, 1908.

WITH reference to the last paragraph of my telegram No. 226 of the 17th instant.

There are still people coming to reside in the village of Gulahek, and they now number about 100 persons.

It is stated by a member of the Tribunal formed to try the prisoners at Bagh-i-Shah that the chief object of the inquiries is to find out who was concerned in the attempt on the life of the Shah, and a considerable number of arrests have been made in the process. Of the persons thus carried to Bagh-i-Shah, the great majority after giving evidence are probably released, but a feeling of insecurity is produced by the constant visits of Cossacks to private houses, and people who consider that they have cause for fear quietly take refuge at Gulahek. I see no way of preventing them from coming, nor any ground for sending them away so long as they continue orderly. A great number are camped in a large garden lent to them, or staying with friends. They do not appear to come with any political object, but merely out of fear of arrest, which is genuine even if to a very large extent unfounded. It seems likely, however, that their numbers will increase, and eventually they may try to bring pressure to bear on us, but at present there is no sign of it, and the likelihood seems to be passing away of a large number of refugees from the bazaars.

If the increasing numbers should threaten the sanitary condition of the village, I should, I presume, be justified in refusing to receive any more who may arrive, and I shall expel as trespassers any persons in the village who may make an attempt to enter the grounds of His Majesty's Legation.

Nothing is being done by the Persian Government to prevent persons from coming to Gulahek.

[25895]

No. 212.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 247.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 25, 1908.

THE case of Hormuz red oxide.

In reply to your telegram No. 188.

I am, and Major Cox seems also to be, of opinion that for the present our only course is to support Moin-ut-Tujjar, although I distrust him greatly. As thus we shall be in the best position if the necessity arises to oppose transfer of Concession to Germans, and there appears at present to be no British firm prepared to apply with any reasonable chance of being successful.

Moin-ut-Tujjar should, however, be given to understand that our support is not to be counted upon unless contract with Strick is renewed, or unless he agrees to form a Company as Messrs. Ellinger suggests. Does this suggestion meet with your approval?

I consider co-operation between the two firms essential.

All intention of working in co-operation with Germans is stoutly denied by Moin-ut-Tujjar.

[25896]

No. 213.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 248.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 25, 1908.

THE case of Hormuz red oxide.

Please refer to my telegram No. 247.

If the necessity were to arise, would you object to my inviting Russian Legation, whose attitude in questions respecting the Gulf has been very loyal, to render us aid in order to offer resistance to applications for Concession by Germans?

[25902]

No. 214.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)(No. 396.)
Sir,*Therapia, July 18, 1908.*

IN connection with our recent representations concerning the Turco-Persian frontier question, the Grand Vizier has communicated to my Russian colleague and myself a number of telegrams purporting to have passed between the Porte and Tahir Pasha respecting the recent Kurdish raids in the neighbourhood of the Baranduz River, in Persian territory. None of these contained a trace of any instructions to withdraw the troops to the positions held last February, which, as I reported in my telegram No. 154 of the 27th ultimo, the Council of Ministers had decided on; the telegrams referred only to the Kurdish raids. We have drawn the attention of the Grand Vizier to this, and he explained it by saying that instructions in the sense of the decision of the Council had really been sent, but that he has had to send them on his own authority, as the Sultan had withheld his sanction from the Council's Mazbata pending further inquiries; his Highness had not therefore been able to communicate them to us. When I asked him how it was that, notwithstanding his instructions, troops were being sent to Teherik, and that barracks were being built for 400 men at Mawana, he said he did not believe it, but that he would at once telegraph to inquire.

Of the telegrams communicated to us there are only two with which I think I need trouble you. I inclose them herewith.

In the first, dated the 26th June (o.s.) (9th July), Tahir Pasha protests that the Persians were responsible for the recent raids, and while admitting that the theory that Turkish Kurds took part may have some foundation, declares that, if the Persians will only desist from their intrigues, the frontier will continue quiet. According to Tahir Pasha, the two worst offenders in the recent raids were Seid Hassan and Osman Bey, who are apparently on Persian territory. Mohteshem-es-Sultaneh has notified Tahir Pasha that he is dispatching a military force against these men, and has asked that they should not be allowed to enter Turkish territory. Yaver Pasha has been warned accordingly.

In the second telegram, dated the 29th June (o.s.) (12th July), Tahir Pasha reports that, as the result of a tour made by the Governor of Hekkiari and Yaver Pasha amongst certain frontier Kurds, these have bound themselves by oath to desist from fighting and not to cross into Persian territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 214.

The President of the Persian Frontier Commission to the Grand Vizier.(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.)*Roumie, le 26 Juin, 1324.*

RÉPONSE au télégramme du 17 Juin.

Les renseignements que j'ai précédemment transmis à votre Altesse sont conformes à la vérité. Les doutes émis à ce sujet par l'Ambassade de Russie proviennent probablement de ce qu'elle n'a pas encore reçu les nouveaux rapports. Les machinations Persanes étaient si habilement ourdies qu'elles ont surpris la bonne foi de tous les étrangers, y compris les Consuls. Si l'enquête que j'ai effectuée en me rendant personnellement dans les villages n'avait dissipé les soupçons conçus à l'égard de nos fonctionnaires et de nos Kurdes, les villageois Chrétiens qui s'étaient réfugiés dans les établissements étrangers n'auraient pas osé rentrer aussitôt dans leurs foyers.

Les Consuls croient que nos Kurdes ont pris part aux actes de pillage; cette croyance peut, jusqu'à un certain point, être fondée. En cas où Seid Hassan et Osman Bey, auteurs de ces méfaits, prouveraient, après leur arrestation par les autorités Persanes, que certains Kurdes Ottomans de basse classe, séduits par les Persans, sont impliqués dans les déprédations dont il s'agit, il est évident que les autorités Impériales s'empresseront de les arrêter et de les punir. Dans la réponse qu'il nous a adressée après vingt jours, Mohitchem-us-Saltana, tout en me

faisant savoir que des forces militaires seraient envoyées pour l'arrestation de Seid Hassan et d'Osman Bey, demandait à ce que ceux-ci ne fussent pas admis sur notre territoire; j'en ai avisé le Commandant de la frontière. Yaver Pacha a pris des mesures efficaces en vue d'empêcher les Kurdes de basse classe de se laisser prendre aux intrigues Persanes. Si les Persans ne renouvellent pas leurs machinations, la plus parfaite tranquillité continuera à régner sur la frontière.

Inclosure 2 in No. 214.

The Governor-General of the Vilayet of Van to the Grand Vizier.(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.)*Le 29 Juin, 1324.*

LE Gouverneur de Hikiary, qui se trouve sur la frontière, télégraphie qu'il a fait, en compagnie du Général de Brigade, Yaver Pacha, des tournées dans certaines communes pour mettre fin à l'animosité existant entre les tribus, et que les Chefs et les Notables des tribus de Bali et de Kenteher ont été appelés par groupes et réconciliés.

Les dits Chefs et Notables se sont engagés sous serment à ne plus commettre d'attentats les uns contre les autres et ont restitué une partie des animaux enlevés. Comme les Chefs et Notables de ces tribus, qui sont établies dans une zone d'une longueur de trente heures, ont également pris l'engagement de ne point franchir la frontière Persane, le maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité dans ces parages se trouve assuré.

[25914]

No. 215.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)(No. 411.)
Sir,*Therapia, July 22, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Fettulah, an eight-year-old son of Shoa-es-Sultaneh, has been staying in Constantinople for the last few days at the Pera Palace. The Prince is accompanied by a suite, amongst whom it is alleged is the child's father disguised as an attendant. The Persian Ambassador, who has no official cognizance of the Shoa-es-Sultaneh's or his son's movements, has made frequent inquiries at the Pera Palace without eliciting any definite information.

I have reason to believe that Shoa-es-Sultaneh recently approached the Porte and the Sultan with a view to being permitted to take asylum in Turkey. He received no encouragement, however, and the object of the visit of Fettulah and his party is not clear.

It is given out that the boy came with the object of attending school in Constantinople, but this intention has now apparently been given up, possibly because the Sultan showed himself unfavourably disposed, and it is said that the party will soon leave for Carlsbad, where Shoa-es-Sultaneh is alleged to be doing a cure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

[25922]

No. 216.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)(No. 320.)
Sir,*Berlin, July 23, 1908.*

IN my despatch No. 291 of the 30th ultimo, I mentioned to you the reported statement of a member of the Persian Legation here that the alleged refusal of the German Legation in Tehran to allow "baskis" to take refuge there would arouse a feeling against Germany among the Liberal party in Persia. The question of "baskis" has been frequently mentioned in the press since then, and yesterday the "Kölnische Zeitung" published a telegram from its Berlin correspondent on the subject. The statement appeared in many other papers, and as they did not publish it as a quotation and the terms were identical with those of the "Kölnische Zeitung's" telegram, it may be inferred that it emanated from the Press Bureau at the Foreign Office.

The statement is to the following effect :—

The disturbances at Tehran had caused many persons to seek refuge at the French, British, and Italian Legations, but the German Legation had refused to allow refugees to enter. The right to take refuge in a foreign Legation was originally claimed by Persians when life was in danger or when they were threatened by the Government. But of late the practice of claiming asylum had taken a different complexion. During the recent troublous times large numbers of Persians had taken refuge at foreign Legations in order to raise energetic protests against Government measures of which they disapproved. The German Legation, however, did not consider it correct to allow such protests to be raised under their protection. They were determined in no way to become involved in the internal affairs of Persia, and to remain perfectly neutral in the disputes between political parties. In this attitude they were closely following the instructions of the Foreign Office, who have laid down that the right to take refuge may only be accorded in cases where humanity cannot refuse it, and when the refugee is in imminent danger. And even in such cases the refugee should only be allowed to remain in the Legation till it is found possible to convey him to a place of safety. The Legation have carefully carried out their instructions, and, as no refugee has been in imminent peril since the disturbances began, none have been admitted. The accusation that Germany has been wanting in humanity in refusing to admit refugees in danger of their lives is consequently groundless, since, were they to present themselves, the German Legation would admit them in the same manner as refugees were recently admitted to the German Legation in Hayti.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

[26106]

No. 217.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

Sir,

India Office, July 25, 1908.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 17th instant, asking for the views of Viscount Morley on the terms of the guarantee given by Messrs. Hajji Ali Akbar and Co. (Limited), in connection with the Sirri Oxide Concession.

The guarantee given by the Company differs materially in the following respects from that which they were asked to furnish in your letter of the 3rd instant :—

1. The Company, while giving an assurance that they will control the Concession in British interests, do not definitely state that they are a British Company, as they were described in Hussein Agha's letter to Major Cox dated the 13th April last.

2. The firm do not undertake positively "not to transfer" the Concession, "nor allow it to be shared in by any foreigner," but merely state that "it is not intended" to do so. Moreover, their reservation of the right to transfer or share it with "constituent members" of the Company would not preclude the possibility of the Concession passing into foreign hands should any foreigner, now or in the future, come under that description. Hussein Agha's brother, it must be remembered, is applying for the Concession in the capacity of a Persian subject.

Lord Morley is of opinion, in view of the importance of keeping the Concession under British control, that the Company should be invited to amend the form of their guarantee so as to cover the points noticed above. It might also be worth while to ascertain through the Board of Trade as to the constitution of the Company.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[26101]

No. 218.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards

herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 20th instant, relative to the proposed appointment of Lieutenant Ranking to Ahwaz.

India Office, July 25, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 218.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 20, 1908.

FOREIGN OFFICE concur in proposal in your telegram dated the 12th June regarding Ranking. They understand that, during Lorimer's leave next year, you contemplate Ranking acting as Vice-Consul at Ahwaz. Treasury have been asked to bear a moiety of the cost.

[26159]

No. 219.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 27th July, relative to affairs of the D'Arcy Oil Syndicate.

India Office, July 27, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 27, 1908.

PLEASE refer to papers transmitted with letters dated 4th ultimo and 2nd instant from Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, regarding D'Arcy's Oil Syndicate. Political Agent, Bushire, telegraphs as follows :—

"The opinion was expressed in a recent letter from the engineer, Oil Syndicate, to the Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, that, for location of oil reservoirs, Syndicate would want to acquire ground on Abadan Island, opposite Mohammerah, and he was hoping on his way home to discuss question of provision with me. The views of His Majesty's Government as to the assurances to be given to the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and the conditions thereof, may be affected by the knowledge that we may shortly need Sheikh's goodwill and co-operation in this connection. The matter is therefore reported with the suggestion that the Syndicate in London might be interrogated by His Majesty's Government as to what they are likely to require."

[25890]

No. 220.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 188.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 26, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I have to-day received the following message (No. 46) from Mr. Wratishaw, dated Urmia the 21st instant :—

"A Turkish force, composed of 5 officers and 120 men, together with about 50 Kurds, occupied Kulunji three days ago. This village is in the Anzel district, and is situated 20 miles up the high road to Salmas, north of Urmia. The various villages of the district have been informed by a letter from Ismail Agha, the leader of the Kurds, that they now form part of the Turkish Empire.

"The Turkish Commissioner swore, in reply to the Persians' immediate protest

[1599]

2 K

against this aggression, that he had no knowledge of it, and suggested the dispatch of a Persian delegate and a Turkish officer to make inquiries into the affair. This was done, and the day before yesterday these two reported that the above facts were true; the officer in command of the Turkish troops at Kulunji told them that he had been ordered by Yaver Pasha to go there. Up to this morning Tahir Pasha affects not to have received any answer to his letter to Yaver Pasha asking for an explanation.

"The Russian Vice-Consul's clerk went to Kulunji, and to-day reports that most of the Kurds have left, but that the troops, who are the 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion of the 60th Regiment (come from Van lately), are expecting a battery of artillery and another company to come to help them to occupy the district.

"Urumia is now cut off from the remainder of Azerbaijan on all sides except that of the lake.

"For weeks past the telegraph line from Urumia has not been working. I am sending this by messenger to Tabreez, to be telegraphed from there."

[26160]

No. 221.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 219.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 27, 1908.

THE case of Hormuz red oxide.

With reference to my telegram No. 217 of the 25th instant. Confirmation of his Concession has been granted to Moïn-ut-Tujjar. He does not wish the formation of a Company as Ellinger suggest, ostensibly because he is not satisfied with the terms, but really because he is afraid of our using our hold over him to bring pressure to bear on him in other questions, such as the case of the Shellalieh shed.

Moïn-ut-Tujjar says that he is willing, on the same terms as before, to enter into short contracts of, say, four years, with Strick or any other British firm.

[26168]

No. 222.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 250.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 27, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 184 of the 23rd instant, on the subject of the Taom murders, it is suggested by Major Cox that he should ask Senior Naval Officer to detain a vessel which would proceed to the pearl banks, after obtaining services of men from Lingah to identify show. In the event of the capture of the guilty parties, they would be taken for identification to Abu Thabi and then be delivered to the Governor of the Gulf ports by the Residency.

The Persian Government would then be informed that the men whom they assert to be dead have been captured, and their trial and adequate punishment would be pressed for. The recovery of compensation from the local Chiefs implicated would also be demanded.

The men could be tried, in the presence of a Representative of His Majesty's Consulate-General, in the Court of the Karguzar.

I have no great hopes that compensation, or even adequate punishment, will be obtained by these measures.

Could not the culprits be sent for trial to India, if the necessary evidence can be obtained? See section 121 of second edition of Wheaton's "International Law" in this connection.

[26173]

No. 223.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 251.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 27, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 173 of the 13th instant, Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the Shah agrees to Mr. Barclay's appointment.

[24357]

No. 223*.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 190.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 27, 1908.

BRITISH Minister at Tehran.

With reference to my telegram No. 173 and my telegram of the 23rd instant, marked private.

If I do not hear from you that the Persian Government has approved the appointment of Mr. Barclay, I shall assume that they do not object to it, and publish the appointment next Thursday.

[26304]

No. 225*.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 128. Very Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, July 28, 1908.

RAILWAYS in Persia.

On the 24th July I spoke to M. Isvolsky on this question, and I learn to-day from the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Russian Government are ready to accept in principle the plan for a railway from Djulfa to Mohammerah. Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs further informs me that the Russian Government will release Persian Government from the obligation to give no Concession before the end of 1910, in view of the importance attached by His Majesty's Government to an early application for the Concession.

On M. Isvolsky's return from Reval, his Excellency will communicate an *aide-mémoire* to the above effect.

[25894]

No. 224.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 191.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 27, 1908.

REFUGEES at Gulahek.

Your attitude and the action you propose to take in case an attempt to enter the grounds of the Legation is made (as indicated in your telegram No. 246 of the 25th instant) have the approval of His Majesty's Government.

Sanitary reasons should be made use of as a pretext for the refusal of permission to further arrivals, if the refugees in the village appear to you to be becoming inconveniently numerous.

[26106]

No. 225.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 192.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 27, 1908.

SIRRI red oxide. With reference to your telegram No. 235 of the 21st instant.

We do not consider guarantee given by Company satisfactory, and are asking them to amend it.

No action need be taken until their reply has been received.

[26296]

No. 226.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 195.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 28, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. My telegram No. 195.

I have received the following telegram from Mr. Consul-General Wratishaw, No. 45 of the 17th instant:—

"The Persian Commissioner, in reply to the last note from Tahir Pasha, proposed to refer the matter to both Constantinople and Tehran, and ask for instructions as to what interpretation should be given to Article 3. Tahir Pasha, in his reply, did not pay any attention to this proposal, but informed me and my colleague to-day that it was impossible for him to ask the Porte to give him fresh instructions on a point which had already been settled, and which his present instructions covered. He also informed us that he had received a telegram from Constantinople on the 23rd June, stating that Prince Mirza Ali Riza Khan had now consented that the basis of the negotiations should be that of the Memorandum of the Porte to him, to which Mr. Barclay referred in his telegram addressed to me on the 26th April last.

"I am informed by the Persian Commissioner that for the moment he is unable to waive the question of Article 3, and start on a general discussion which Tahir is anxious to enter upon.

"All further progress is prevented by Article 3."

[26283]

No. 227.

Mr. G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 196.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 28, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Please see my telegram No. 188 of the 26th instant.

The following message from Mr. Wratishaw, No. 47, was telegraphed yesterday from Tabreez, whither it was sent by post from Urumia on the 22nd instant:—

"The Turkish Commissioner states that the troops, who, as reported in my telegram No. 46 of yesterday, had occupied Kutunji, will be withdrawn. He says that they were sent there in error."

[25895]

No. 228.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 193.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 28, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide. With reference to your telegrams Nos. 247 and 248 of the 25th instant.

We are in agreement with your opinion that for the present the best course to adopt is to afford support to Moin.

We are endeavouring to induce Ellinger and Strick to come to terms, and have made certain that the latter is really anxious to secure contract.

Opposition to any application from a foreigner should in the meantime be offered by every means in your power.

[26400]

No. 229.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 194.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 28, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 193 of to-day: Hormuz red oxide.

We are informed by Ellinger and Strick that they have asked Moin by telegraph for a contract for two years and a-half. Terms were suggested.

Pending a reply from Moin, they suggest that it is unnecessary for us to take any action.

[26418]

No. 230.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 252.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 29, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 246 of the 25th instant.

There are now about 150 bastis in Gukdok, and they continue to arrive. This morning I was successful in persuading about twelve to leave, and further arrivals may, I hope, be prevented by this. Some excitement may, however, be produced here by the news that the Constitution of Turkey has been re-established.

[26419]

No. 231.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 253.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 29, 1908.

A TELEGRAM has been sent by Zil-es-Sultan to the Shah asking for permission to travel via Tehran. I think it is unnecessary to send a member of the Legation to accompany His Imperial Highness, though he urges me to do so. The Russian Minister and I are taking steps through the Minister for Foreign Affairs to obtain the Shah's guarantee for His Imperial Highness' property during his absence from Persia. If you approve, I propose to communicate it to the Zil in a very guarded letter. His Imperial Highness is very desirous of obtaining assurances in writing from His Majesty's Legation. M. de Hartwig has sent him a letter promising protection in general terms on condition that he leaves Persia very shortly.

[26420]

No. 232.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 254.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 29, 1908.

TABREEZ situation.

Yesterday, during continuance of severe fighting, a shell fired from a Royalist gun struck the building of the Imperial Bank of Persia.

According to report from the Vice-Consul, however, there are signs on both sides that combatants are anxious that peace should be made.

[26421]

No. 233.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 255.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 29, 1908.

PLEASE see my telegram No. 242 of the 24th instant.

There seems to be no truth in statement made to Belgian Chargé d'Affaires regarding the appeal of the Persian Government to Germany for assistance in Turco-Persian frontier question.

[26422]

No. 234.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 256.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 29, 1908.

RUSSIAN Military Attaché in Seistan.

Please refer to my despatch No. 145 of the 15th ultimo and your telegram No. 180 of the 20th instant.

I regard as satisfactory explanation offered by Russian Government.

According to report from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan, Dantal was not dragoon, but Military Attaché. He was about 36 years old, and would have reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in another month if he had not died.

[26129]

No. 235.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 134.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 29, 1908.

THE Persian Chargé d'Affaires called at this Office on the 24th instant and informed Sir C. Hardinge that he had been instructed by his Government to state that the Shah was much gratified by the refusal of His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tehran to allow 200 persons who were desirous of taking bast to pass the gates of His Majesty's Legation. The Persian Government were convinced that this action of Mr. Smart would produce an excellent effect.

Sir C. Hardinge took the opportunity of stating that His Majesty's Government were rather surprised at having received no reply from the Persian Government as to whether the appointment of Mr. G. Barclay as His Majesty's Minister at Tehran was agreeable to the Shah, especially since the inquiry had been made a fortnight earlier.

Mehdi Khan said that he would at once telegraph and press for an answer.

Sir C. Hardinge further remarked on the extraordinary conduct of the Persian Minister designate to this country, who, although there had been no Persian Minister in London for two years, and although his appointment had been accepted by the King nearly a year and a-half ago, was still, according to the information in the possession of His Majesty's Government, in Berlin, notwithstanding the fact that he had presented his letters of recall to the Emperor some time since.

This attitude of Ehtesham-es-Saltaneh could hardly be called respectful to the King, or conducive to the Minister's popularity when he arrived.

[1599]

Mehdi Khan disclaimed any intentional discourtesy on the part of the Persian Government, but had no excuse to offer for the delay in the arrival of the Minister. He said he would write to Ehtesham-es-Saltaneh.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[25760]

No. 236.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 29, 1908.*
WITH reference to your letter of the 18th February last, relative to the proposal to obtain from the Persian Government the control by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,* giving reasons for his opinion that the present is a favourable moment for obtaining the consent of the Persian Government to this arrangement.

The Treasury, as Viscount Morley is aware, refused, by their letter of the 1st April, to sanction the proposal that half the cost involved in this transaction should be defrayed from Imperial funds, and I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey has since been in private correspondence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to obtain a reversal of this decision and that the result of his action will be made known to Lord Morley in due course.

I am to inquire in the meanwhile whether his Lordship sees any objection to authority being given to the Indo-European Telegraph Company at Tehran to negotiate with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs in accordance with the suggestion contained in the fourth paragraph of Mr. Marling's telegram.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[26511]

No. 237.

Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received July 30.)

Sir, *28, Oxford Street, Manchester, July 29, 1908.*
WITH reference to yours of the 24th instant, we beg to inform you that we are, and have been for many years, the sole agents for the Mouintujar for the sale of his oxide from Ormuz, and we are quite prepared at all times, subject to any existing engagements into which we may have entered on behalf of the Mouintujar, to enter into negotiations with any British firm who may be desirous of obtaining contracts for the taking away of oxide from Ormuz. We may mention that we cabled to Persia recently an offer from Messrs. Andrew Weir and Co. for a three years' contract, which the Mouintujar declined, and we have to-day cabled an offer by Messrs. Frank C. Strick and Co. (Limited), for 20,000 tons for a contract lasting for 2½ years, which we trust he will accept. Should, however, the Mouintujar refuse to entertain this contract, we are quite prepared to negotiate with any other British firm with a view to making a contract for the taking away of oxide from Ormuz.

As requested in your favour under reply, we hand you below particulars of contracts which we have made on behalf of the Mouintujar with British firms for the purchase and shipment of oxide.

We are, &c.
(Signed) ELLINGER AND CO.

Particulars of Contracts.

	Tons.
West of England Ochre and Oxide Company (Limited), Bitton ...	100
Holzapfels Compositions Company (Limited), Newcastle-on-Tyne	200
Valley Water Mills Colour Company, Keynsham ...	500
Andrew Weir and Co., London, contract for freight, to be shipped by British steamer from Ormuz to Avonmouth and Hamburg or Nordenham ...	4,500-5,500

[26419]

No. 238.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 196.)
(Telegraphic.) P.
ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

Foreign Office, July 30, 1908.

The communication you propose, as also the action you have taken, has the approval of His Majesty's Government.

[26159]

No. 239.

Foreign Office to Mr. J. Preece.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, July 30, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, in a recent letter addressed to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, the engineer of the Oil Concessions Syndicate expressed the opinion that that Company would wish to acquire ground on Alcadan Island, opposite Mohammerah, on which to place oil reservoirs, and that he proposed to discuss this question with His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire on his way back to England.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey would be obliged if you would be good enough to inform him what the requirements of the Syndicate are likely to be in this respect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[26157]

No. 240.

Foreign Office to Mr. J. Preece.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, July 30, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, according to a telegraphic report which he has received from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, the local manager of the Oil Concessions Syndicate will leave his post at the end of the present month, and will almost certainly refuse a further extension of his contract. The superior staff will be reduced by his departure to one man, whose health is bad and who will take the earliest opportunity of leaving his post also.

In order to avoid confusion, delay, and waste of money, a competent and sufficiently numerous European staff is most necessary at the present moment, when the actual and expected developments of the oilfield appear likely to involve negotiations for a refinery, telephones, pipe lines, &c.

Mr. Marling accordingly expresses the hope that the Syndicate realize the position of affairs, and are making the necessary arrangements.

He adds that it is undesirable that they should rely on Captain Lorimer to conduct their negotiations, and that it is important that one of their staff should be able to speak Persian.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[26670]

No. 241.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 257.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 31, 1908

WITH reference to my telegram No. 252 of the 29th instant.

I persuaded some twenty-five more people to leave Gulahek on Tuesday and Wednesday, but last night and this morning about 180 arrived, and there are now about 300 in the village. A number have consented to leave under strong pressure, but it is unlikely that any considerable proportion will be induced to follow this example.

They have an avowedly political object, and they intend at present to use the village of Gulahek as a safe place from which agitation may be carried on.

I am afraid that there will be an increase in the numbers here, and that an attempt may be made to force our hand, although it is perfectly well known that the Legation will give no assistance.

The conviction of the people is that we shall never expel them by force.

It is probable that a large proportion of those now in Gulahek could be got rid of without offering more than passive resistance, but action such as this on our part would be regarded as active support given to the Shah. Moreover, unless a sufficiently large police force, say, 50 men, were obtained from the Persian Government to prevent future access to Gulahek, it would not prevent the recurrence of the present situation.

I should be glad of instructions how I should act.

[26681]

No. 242.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 258.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 31, 1908.

VICE-CONSUL at Tabreez reports in telegram No. 107 of yesterday's date that for two days there had been no firing. Clerical party were, it was asserted on good authority, doing their best to bring about a reconciliation between the two factions. It was, however, reported that strong reinforcements for the Government troops might very shortly be expected.

[26758]

No. 243.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 259.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, July 31, 1908.

REFUGEES at Gulahek. My telegram No. 257 of to-day.

This afternoon about 100 refugees left the village and went direct to the Turkish Embassy, where, it is rumoured, others from Tehran will join them.

I have ordered that the gates are to be kept shut at His Majesty's Legation.

[25611]

No. 244.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 197.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 31, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide. With reference to my telegram No. 191 of the 28th instant.

The day before yesterday an offer from Strick for 20,000 tons for contract to last two years and a-half was telegraphed to Moïn by Ellinger.

The question as to whether acceptance should be urged on Moïn is for you to decide.

[26670]

No. 245.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 198.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 31, 1908.

REFUGEES at Gulahek. With reference to your telegram No. 252 of the 29th instant.

You should endeavour to induce as many refugees as possible to depart from village by means of action suggested in my telegram No. 191 of the 27th instant. You should make it clear to those who are already there that it is impossible for us to allow either the village or the Legation to be made use of for purposes of political agitation, adding that force will be employed to prevent the continuance of attempts to do so.

It is undesirable in the highest degree that Gulahek should become a safe place whence political agitation can be carried on.

[25625]

No. 246.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 195.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1908.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 97 of the 23rd April last, relative to the wish expressed by the Sheikh of Mohammerah and the Bakhtiari Khans for nearer relations with His Majesty's Government, and I transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence which has passed between this Department and the India Office on the subject.*

You will observe from these papers that it has been agreed that it would be undesirable at present to give the Bakhtiari Khans any assurances beyond an expression of friendly sympathy, but that in the case of the Sheikh of Mohammerah the general assurances already given to him might be repeated and extended to his successors, and that it might further be pointed out to him that His Majesty's Government have engaged to respect the independence and integrity of Persia, which involves the maintenance of the *status quo* in that country and includes the continuance of his present state of autonomy; external aggression on him would therefore constitute an infringement of Persian integrity, which is recognized by the Anglo-Russian Convention.

I have accordingly to request you to instruct His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire to address a communication to the Sheikh in this sense, and His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz to take an opportunity of offering to the Khans an assurance of the friendly sympathy of His Majesty's Government towards the Bakhtiari tribe.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[26168]

No. 247.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 20th instant, relative to the measures to be taken to effect the capture of the men known to have been concerned in the Taona murders, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,† suggesting the procedure to be followed with this object.

The suggestion contained in the last paragraph of this telegram (the reference in which should be to paragraph 124 and not 121 of the second edition of Wheaton's "International Law") would appear to be that the men should be treated as having been guilty of piracy *jure gentium* and as such justiciable by any Court before which they may be brought.

The facts detailed in Mr. Grant Duff's No. 177 of 1906 would, it appears

* See Part XIV, No. 197; and *ante*, No. 194.
[1599]

† No. 222.
2 M

to Sir E. Grey, amount to piracy if there were any evidence to show that these particular crimes were part of a regular course of conduct practised by these Taona men, or that the murders were committed and the ship seized with a view to committing depredations on all comers; but the crime was committed in January 1903 (five and a half years ago), it was an isolated act, and there is no suggestion that it has been repeated since, or that any attempt has been made to repeat it since. It is therefore probable that a prosecution for piracy would fail.

In these circumstances it appears to Sir E. Grey to be inadvisable that any attempt should be made to send the murderers, when seized, for trial in India. These men are not British subjects, the murders were not committed within the jurisdiction of the Indian Courts, and the Indian Courts could not take cognizance of the case except as one of piracy.

Sir E. Grey is of opinion that, though the seizure of the men by a British ship on the banks would be a high-handed action, its justification would lie in the failure of the Persian Government during the last five years to bring the murderers to justice and obtain compensation for the families of the victims. It would have to be on that ground that the action should be defended if called in question.

Mr. Marling is not sanguine that the delivery of the culprits to the Persian authorities would result in their proper punishment and the payment of compensation, and I am accordingly to suggest, for the consideration of Viscount Morley, the advisability of adopting the alternative course of taking them to Abu Thabi, not merely for identification, but for trial and punishment. In favour of this procedure I am to adduce the fact that even according to Western ideas these natives of Taona would be justiciable by an Abu Thabi Court, for their crimes were committed on the high seas on an Abu Thabi dhow (see 687 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894), and if they were taken to Abu Thabi and detained there, blood money for the relatives of the victims could perhaps be exacted from the Chief of Taona, who shared in the loot, and punishment meted out by the Chief of Abu Thabi, or, if this be impracticable, the men sent back to Taona only when some satisfactory undertaking had been obtained that they would be properly tried and punished when they returned to Persian soil.

It appears to Sir E. Grey that, as His Majesty's Government are the guardians of these Trucial Chiefs, the seizure of the men by a British war-ship at the banks is a less high-handed action when it is ancillary to an intended exercise of Abu Thabi jurisdiction than when it is intended to hand them over to the Persian authorities, who might have dealt with them at any time during the last five years had they chosen to do so, as they must during that time have been constantly within the Persian jurisdiction.

I am accordingly to transmit to you herewith draft of a telegram which, in view of the considerations above set forth, Sir E. Grey proposes, with Lord Morley's concurrence, to address to Mr. Marling,* pointing out the course to be followed and requesting him to instruct His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire to proceed accordingly.

The preliminary measures suggested appear to be satisfactory to effect the capture of the men.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive an expression of his Lordship's opinion on this subject with as little delay as may be convenient.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. LANGLEY.

[26788] No. 248.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 207.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 2, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Please see my telegram No. 196 of the 28th ultimo, repeating Mr. Wratislaw's telegram No. 47 of the 22nd ultimo.

I have received the following telegram from Mr. Wratislaw, No. 48, dated the 27th ultimo, at Tabreez, whither it had been sent by messenger from Urumia:—

"The Turks having withdrawn from the district of Dool, the Persians have again occupied it.

"After remaining four days in Kulunji the Turkish troops left and went to

* Draft telegram to Mr. Marling.

Behleh, where they probably now are. Behleh is within Somai, and is only 6 miles from Kulunji. Taher appears to have little, if any, control over Yaver Pasha's actions, and the latter's removal from the frontier is absolutely necessary if the Turkish Government's desire to put an end to such aggressions is sincere.

"The whole Turkish battalion, which belongs to the 52nd (not the 60th) Regiment, is in Charik and Somai."

[26791]

No. 249.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 260.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 2, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez. My telegram No. 254 of the 29th ultimo.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul reports that the local negotiations for peace have broken down and that firing has been renewed. The Royalist forces are firing shells, some of which are falling in the Christian quarter of the town.

An appeal through the Consuls for the intervention of the Legations has been made by the merchants. Russian Minister agrees with me, however, in thinking that we cannot now, when the reinforcements are about to reach Tabreez, ask the Shah to hold his hand.

Revolutionaries would interpret his consent to comply with our request as a sign of weakness and would be encouraged to continue the struggle.

[26803]

No. 250.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 261.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 3, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 259 of the 31st ultimo.

Yesterday there were a few Cossacks stationed in the neighbourhood of the village, and also some on the road which passes in front of the gate of the Legation. There are fewer to-day. We cannot well object, as the road is in Zerguendeh.

Last night seven Cossacks entered the village, but confessed that they were not ordered to come. After referring to Tehran they retired.

A semi-official expostulation has been made by me to the Minister for Foreign Affairs against the violation of our privileges in the village; such action, I have pointed out, increases my difficulty in persuading undesirables in Gulahek to go away.

No more bastis have arrived. Yesterday about forty more went away.

[26809]

No. 251.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 164.)

Sir,

Gulahek, June 22, 1908.

WITH reference to Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw's telegram No. 37 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of his despatch No. 9 of the 31st ultimo, therein referred to, reporting on the surrender of Sheitanabad, a village possessing a strong fort garrisoned by Persian soldiers, to Kurds acting under the orders of the Turkish Kaïmakam of Ushnu, Fathullah Sami Effendi. Mr. Wratislaw adds that practically the whole district, up to the Baranduz River, has now tendered its submission, while his later telegraphic reports show that villages to the north of that river, and even Ardishai, the lake port of Urumia, have suffered seriously from the depredations of the Kurdish tribesmen, acting with the connivance, or, more probably, at the instigation, of the Turks.

The Russian Minister is very seriously concerned at the position of affairs, not only in these districts, but also in those bordering on Russia, which he informs me is equally lamentable, and would be extremely glad to see some action taken by his Government to impress on the Sublime Porte the serious view which is taken at St. Petersburg of the continued encroachments of the Turkish forces on Persian territory in these regions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 251.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 9.)

Sir,

Urumia, May 31, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 32 of the 25th instant reporting the surrender of Sheitanabad to Kurds from Ushnu, I have the honour to submit the following further details of the occurrence.

The villages (Sunni) of the district of Dool submitted to the Turks at the end of April after a raid on them, executed, as already reported, by Kurds from Mergavar and Ushnu, but Sheitanabad, which boasts of a strong fort and was garrisoned by Persian soldiers, stood aloof. Haidar Khan, the son of Agha Khan-mir-Penj, of Urumia, the Persian owner of the district, was also in residence there.

On the 20th instant Mustafa Khan Zerzar, of Ushnu, sent sixty of his men to Diza, a Sunni village on the lake east of Sheitanabad, who persuaded or forced the inhabitants and those of other adjacent villages to join them in an attack on Sheitanabad. On hearing the news, Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh sent 100 Maku horsemen to the spot to reinforce the garrison. The numbers of the Kurds were continually augmented by fresh arrivals from Ushnu, and also from Lahijan (Mamash Kurds), until on the 23rd, their total was estimated, probably with some Oriental exaggeration, at 4,000 men. On the 24th, after a very feeble defence, Haidar Khan surrendered, and was taken to Ushnu to make his submission. The Maku men returned to Urumia, having apparently sustained no losses.

According to latest reports, Haidar Khan was well received at Ushnu, where the Kaïmakam, Fathullah Sami Ellendi, whose name I gave by mistake as Shakir in my despatch No. 8, presented him with a horse and sent him back to Sheitanabad, as Governor of the district, with an escort of six Turkish soldiers. This news was brought yesterday by a messenger sent by Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh to inquire, and I cannot vouch for it at present.

After the surrender of Sheitanabad the Kurds advanced along the Urumia road as far as Reskashan, which they plundered. They had previously destroyed the Shia village of Kergan on the lake, and killed a number of the inhabitants. Since then practically the whole of the country as far north as the Baranduz River has offered its submission.

The attitude of the local Turkish authorities towards submitted villages may be conjectured from the inclosed translation of a letter addressed on the 9th May by the Ushnu Kaïmakam to Haidar Khan, and warning him not to interfere in any way with the villages round Sheitanabad which had then already submitted.

Several villages north of the Baranduz River are known to have sent in their names as candidates for Turkish protection, and others, particularly the large village of Dizerteke, are inclined to do so in the hope of thereby obtaining immunity from Kurdish outrages. That district is particularly exposed to the attacks of Mergavar Kurds and of the men of the late Mehmet Beg who are at present installed on the western border of Baranduz. Mehmet Beg himself was murdered ten days ago by his nephew, Bahram Beg, and next day Bahram Beg and his brother were killed in their turn by friends of Mehmet Beg. It is hoped that the feud thus started will result in the country being rid of still more members of this fine old county family.

Tamar Beg, the other Begzadeh Chief mentioned in my despatch No. 8, has for some time past taken up his quarters with forty or fifty men in the village of Bend (Ban), 4 miles west of Urumia. He from time to time levies contributions on neighbouring villages, which he calls "collecting taxes on behalf of the Turkish Government." He states that he is acting for the Turkish Commander at Mawana, though the latter affects to disavow him. It is a fact, however, that Tamar Beg pays frequent visits to Tergavar and that he has had recent interviews with the Turkish Commander.

The threatened hostilities between Ikbâl-es-Sultaneh of Maku, and Ismail Agha, Shekoik, have been averted by a compromise. This pacific solution has probably been aided by the conviction which prevails on both sides of the frontier that Somai and Chahrik will shortly be occupied by the Turks, a belief which is strengthened by a letter written to Ismail Agha in the interests of peace by one Seyid Abdul Hamid Pasha, a Turkish Kurd, who states therein that "in a week," as Daniel Pasha says, "Taher Pasha will reach Bashkaleh and will then certainly send Turkish soldiers to Somai and Chahrik. Wait, therefore, that the result may be known."

Yaver Bey, the Turkish Commandant at Mawana, has been promoted to the rank of Liva (Major-General) and is now Yaver Pasha. The forces under his command have been increased by his two battalions of the 29th Regiment being brought up to full strength, i.e., about 1,000 men the two.

Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh says that he has been offered the post of Minister of the Interior, but he informs me confidentially that his friends in Tehran advise him not to accept.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 251.

Kaïmakam of Ushnu to Haidar Khan.

(Translation.)

April 26, 1324 (May 9, 1908).

YOUR actions and aggressions towards the villages of Islam will later on cause great difficulty to the two Governments. You know what trouble was caused by your killing of Shekoik. Now I write to you, and your interest is this, that henceforward you should not annoy or trespass on the villages of Islam which have submitted to the Turkish Government. It is not to your interest to do so. If you do aggress, both Governments will be compelled to prevent you and punish you. Certainly you must stop this action of yours, or you will be exposed to great responsibility.

Kaïmakam of Ushnu,
(Seal) FATHULLAH SAMI.

[26810]

No. 252.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 165.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 9, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to my telegram No. 126 of the 28th May, a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire respecting the recent find of an oil well in the vicinity of Maidan-i-Minaftun. I am informed by Messrs. Lynch's representative here that the name of the spot where the oil was struck is Masjid-i-Suleiman.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 252.

Consul-General Cox to Mr. Marling.

(No. 82. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, June 13, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, a copy of a letter which has been received from Lieutenant A. T. Wilson, in charge of the Indian oil guards at Maidan Minaftun, regarding the affairs of the Oil Syndicate.

I have, &c.
(In the absence of His Britannic Majesty's
Consul-General),
(Signed) A. P. TREVOR, Captain,
First Assistant.

Inclosure 2 in No. 252.

Lieutenant Wilson to Consul-General Cox.

Sir,

Maidan Minaftun, June 1, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 28th ultimo.
2. In amplification of the above the following details may be of interest: oil was struck at one of the two borings, and it is confidently expected that it will be struck again under similar circumstances at the second boring.

[1599]

2 N

3. The oil has not been as yet fully tested, but it seems to be of particularly good grade, and burns readily in the state in which it issues from the ground. It is already being used to burn lime, and may be expected to arrest the progressive depletion of the scanty timber resources of the district.

4. The quantity at present obtained by natural flow is about 20,000 gallons per diem, but there is little doubt that a greater yield will be obtained when the hole is deepened. This operation is at present impeded by great quantities of natural gas issuing from the boring. It has effects similar to those of "laughing gas" rapidly rendering those exposed to its influence unconscious, and, in addition, has a bad effect on the eyes.

5. I will notify you in due course of the results of further boring.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. T. WILSON, Lieutenant,
In charge of Indian Oil Guards.

[26811]

No. 253.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 166.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire forwarding correspondence between Bushire and Mohammerah regarding the Turco-Persian frontier dispute.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 253.

Consul-General Cox to Mr. Marling.

(No. 83. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, June 13, 1908.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 12, dated the 8th April, 1908, I have the honour to forward herewith, for your information, copies of communications which have passed between His Majesty's Consul, Mohammerah, and myself regarding the recent developments on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(In the absence of His Britannic Majesty's
Consul-General),
(Signed) A. P. TREVOR, Captain,
First Assistant.

Inclosure 2 in No. 253.

Consul-General Cox to Consul McDouall.

(No. 1599.)

Sir,

Bushire, May 26, 1908.

IN continuation of the correspondence ending with this Office indorsement No. 891, dated the 17th March, 1908, I have the honour to forward, for information, a copy of the communication cited in the margin, with inclosures, which I have received from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, regarding the recent developments on the Turco-Persian frontier.*

As I am not likely to have an opportunity of seeing the Sardar Arfa for some time, I shall be glad if you will inform him of the drift of Sir E. Grey's reply so far as you think the present position of affairs renders desirable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major,
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

* Mr. Marling, No. 12, April 8, 1908.

Inclosure 3 in No. 253.

Consul McDouall to Consul-General Cox.

(No. 56. Confidential.)

Sir,

Mohammerah, June 6, 1908.

WITH reference to your No. 1599, dated the 26th May, and inclosures, regarding the Turco-Persian frontier, I have the honour to inform you that I have informed the Sardar Arfa that His Majesty's Government had instructed you through the Legation to inform him that they were fully alive to the situation, but did not anticipate any Turkish aggression in this neighbourhood, and that they had written to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject. In the absence of a map I thought it as well not to say more as to the contents of Sir E. Grey's despatch to Sir N. O'Connor as long as the Sheikh did not apprehend any trouble in this neighbourhood. Should the position later render it desirable, I might give him further information.

I asked him if he had heard of any suspicious movements on the part of the Turks. He replied in the negative, and said that at Bussorah, though there were nominally two battalions, he had ascertained that the actual number of men was only about 300. The Bussorah authorities are, he said, hardly likely to attempt any action which would involve them in trouble with him, considering the large number of his tribesmen who live in and near Bussorah. If, however, the Bagdad authorities should act against Hawizeh, the Persian Government might expect him to take Bussorah, which he could do with ease; but there were many British subjects there. I remarked that it appeared to me probable that, in the event of hostilities, the British Government would warn both countries not to operate on or near the river, and asked him if he anticipated any trouble on the Hawizeh border. He replied that, so far as the Turkish Arab tribes were concerned, it would be against their interests if the Turks encroached on the Persian territory, which is their asylum when in trouble with the Turks. This specially applies to the Beni Lam, but only to a certain extent to the Madan of Amara. He had reason, however, to suspect Assad Khan, Sheikh of the Beni Salih, near Hawizeh, of intriguing with the Turks, and to a less extent Farhan-el-Assad. He is leaving to-day for the Karun to inquire into these and other matters, and may, if necessary, replace Assad Khan by another Sheikh.

With regard to the border, the only map in my possession on which the actual administrative border, as accepted by the local authorities of Bussorah and Mohammerah, appears correctly given is that of South-Eastern Turkey lately issued by the Topographical Section, General Staff of His Majesty's War Office (T.S.G.S., No. 2209). I have heard that the Turks claim that the town of Mohammerah only is Persian territory, but not on good authority. The actual border is at least 6 miles from the town, and this district is occupied by tribes of Persian nationality, cultivating dates, and the Sarfar Arfa's palaces of Fehlia and Kasr Khag'alia are in it, as well as other houses belonging to him and his tribal chieftains. Further, the ownership of Hawizeh, which is now under the Sardar Arfa and has always been administered by Persia, has never been settled by Treaty. In the case of the districts under the Sardar Arfa, including the town of Hawizeh, there would be no difficulty in proving actual administration by Persia for many years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. McDOUALL.

[26812]

No. 254.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 167. Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 14, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch addressed by Major Cox to the Government of India giving a most interesting review of the general political situation in the Persian Gulf. Major Cox' despatch so exactly represents my own opinions on such questions as lie within my purview that I need do no more than offer a few observations on one or two special points.

I am more particularly in agreement in his advocacy of a personal discussion of Gulf questions between His Majesty's Representative in Tehran and the Resident in

the Gulf. So far as I can see, however, there is but little prospect that the state of affairs in the capital will enable the former to leave his post for some time to come, and the only alternative would seem to be that the Resident in the Gulf should come to Tehran. I am not, indeed, prepared to say that the latter is not the preferable alternative; the Legation is, indeed, kept so well informed of Gulf questions, both individual and general, by Major Cox' admirable and exhaustive despatches that I doubt whether the short visit which a Minister could pay to Bushire would add very much to his effective knowledge. The Resident, on the other hand, is in the nature of things less well supplied with information on the political conditions at Tehran, or at all events obtains such information only after considerable delay, and I am disposed to believe that a visit of the Resident to Tehran would on the whole produce better results than would a hasty tour in the Gulf by the Minister. I express this opinion with the greater confidence after reading Major Cox' present despatch, in which there is scarcely a single sentence on purely Persian questions, and but few on Gulf matters outside the jurisdiction of the Legation, which might not well have been written from Tehran instead of Bushire.

As regards the inimical attitude towards us of some of the Russian Consular officers in the Gulf, on which Major Cox lays some stress, I must confess that I have not found it easy, in the absence of definite charges, to approach the Russian Minister on the question. I have, however, on one or two occasions towards the end of last year mentioned to him that the Residency Agent at Lingah frequently found that Sadeed-es-Sultaneh was using his influence as Russian Consular officer to our detriment. M. de Hartwig promised to send, and I make no question did send, instructions to the Sadeed to cease from activity of the kind complained of, but, speaking from memory, I gathered from his language that he had not much hope that his injunctions would produce much effect, as Sadeed-es-Sultaneh was rather inclined to be independent.

I have never mentioned M. Orseenko's attitude to M. de Hartwig, as from the occasional references he has made to that gentleman I have been led to gather that he has a very high opinion of his capacity and services, and that in default of some definite charge I have felt that no good would result from doing so.

I am also very much impressed with the desirability of appointing a British Consular officer in place of the Residency Agent at Lingah. I have more than once been at a loss to explain to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs what the precise status of the latter official is. He would not appear to possess rightly any Consular functions, for no exequatur has been granted to him by the Persian Government. But this is a matter of secondary importance, the real point is that, in view of the efforts which Germany is making to establish a stray interest at Lingah, it is of considerable moment that Great Britain should be so represented there that her interests should be adequately protected and advanced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 254.

Major Cox to Mr. Marling.

(No. 73. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, June 6, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith for your information a copy of my letter dated the 6th June, 1908, to the Government of India reviewing the political situation within my sphere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 254.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, June 6, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to state that when Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, His Majesty's late Minister at Tehran, left his post on short leave in the autumn, I wrote to urge him to

return, if possible, via the Persian Gulf. Subsequently, on learning that he would not resume his appointment in Persia, I ventured to express to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the hope that it might be found practicable for Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's successor to join his post by this route.

It would, I feel confident, have been greatly in the public interest and to the advantage of the work between His Majesty's Legation and this Residency had the new Minister been able in my company to examine on the spot various aspects of the political and commercial outlook in the south, recently modified as it has been by the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention, the activity of Germany and the effect of the national movement in Persia upon the economic condition of the country. In the hope that this meeting might take shape, I deferred addressing any special representations to the Government of India on the existing situation, but the travelling season has now passed, and I can no longer look forward to the privilege of discussing it in person with His Majesty's Representative in the first instance. I am therefore constrained to lay the following independent observations before the Government of India:—

2. During the past eighteen months the situation has been very considerably affected, as far as our interests in the sphere of my appointment are concerned, by the three forces or events above quoted.

I will touch upon their several effects in turn.

3. *Our Reconciliation with Russia.*—M. Passak, during the four years in which he represented Russian interests in Fars and the Gulf, appeared to me to work against us in every direction in which useful openings could be gained for so doing, and he apparently evinced the same disposition when transferred to the Russian Legation at Tehran. Of M. Andre Miller, who succeeded him, I have never had any cause for complaint. During the progress of the negotiations leading up to the Convention his attitude was correct and cordial, and since its conclusion our relations have increased in frankness, and I have every reason to hope and believe that the Russian Consulate-General at Bushire has ceased working to our prejudice.

The same cannot yet be said of their Consulate at Bunder Abbas, which M. Oyseenko still fills. Deprived by the conclusion of the Convention and probably by specific instructions from his Legation of any legitimate excuse for direct or overt opposition, he seems unable to divest himself of habits and bias of long-standing, and continues to be a considerable source of inconvenience to our Consulate and interests through the instrumentality of several Persian agents whom he employs on missions of espionage and intrigue. I may mention two who are chiefly prominent; firstly, the Sadood-es-Sultaneh, a drunken, but clever, little Persian with whom, when Foreign Office Agent at Bushire a few years ago, the Residency refused to hold communication owing to his undesirable character and his obstructive attitude towards British interests; secondly, one Abdul Kassim, at one time a Munchi in the British Residency, but discharged as an undesirable character. Whenever any strings exist which can be pulled to our prejudice, those persons and others like them are there to pull them, either by newspaper articles or by the encouragement of local Medjliss and Persian "patriots" in promoting the new doctrine of "Persia for the Persians and away with foreign influence." Foreign influence, so far as they and the Gulf are concerned, is a synonym for British influence, and it is to the efforts of such persons and others of their kidney that the frequent difficulties which we now experience in effecting the protection of Bahreinis and subjects of the Trucial Coast are primarily due.

4. It is of interest to note here that whereas I have always prohibited the Persian employes of the Residency from joining the numerous mushroom Societies which the national movement has generated, and from identifying themselves with party politics, the representatives of other Powers appear to place no such restrictions on their men, who, in the case of Bunder Abbas, seem to be actively encouraged thereto by M. Oyseenko. But it is difficult to formulate definite charges in such matters, which could be fully substantiated if necessity arose, and I can only hope that the evil is a temporary one which, in view of our altered relations with Russia, will disappear with M. Oyseenko's departure on leave or elsewhere or perhaps with the relinquishment altogether of the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas for which there is now no serious justification.

With the above exception, Russian competition in the Gulf, whether commercial or political, may, I think, be regarded for the present as giving us little or no cause for anxiety.

5. *The Attitude of Germany.*—Until comparatively lately the German Consulate at [159]

Bushire may be said to have been merely a post of observation, but since the inception of the Hamburg-Amerika steamer service to the Gulf and the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention, it can no longer be regarded in that light.

In May 1907 Dr. Listemann, the incumbent of the German Consulate, was translated to his Legation for the summer, and since his return, after six months under the influence of Herr von Richthofen, his bearing has altogether altered. Whereas formerly he used to mix freely with the rest of the Bushire community socially, he is nowadays seldom seen anywhere, and keeps much to himself. Officially, though outwardly friendly, he shows himself in many little ways more prone to worry than before, and at present the question of Gulf quarantine seems to be the direction in which, apart from the Abu Musa case, his energies are chiefly directed. But though it will no doubt assume more of a political aspect as time goes on, the present Anglo-German question in the Gulf and Southern Persia is essentially commercial, and it is to that aspect of it that we now need chiefly to direct our energies. In this connection, I may mention that Messrs. Wonekhans' agency at Lingah is being worked with great activity under Mr. Brown, who has sometimes two, at other times three, German assistants with him, and they appear to be using Lingah where, owing to the absence of serious competition from our own nationals, they can practically do as they like, as a training-ground for their newly-arrived assistants and as the head-quarters of their Gulf operations, as distinct from their Russoh-Bagdad branch. Moreover, Mr. Brown, except for his own assistants, being the only European now in Lingah, is identifying himself closely with local politics, and endeavouring to constitute himself a power in the place in a way which is likely to prove of considerable inconvenience to us.

6. *The Effect of the Recent National and Constitutional Movement upon the Administrative and Economic Conditions in Persia and on the Persian Gulf Littoral.*—Much might be written regarding the general results of the past eighteen months' working of the movement; but Government must be generally familiar with its life history from the diaries and reports of their officers in Southern Persia, and I will therefore curtail my remarks as far as practicable.

The national development is obviously one which any British Government would be, *prima facie*, disposed, on principle, to watch with sympathetic interest, and I think it may be presumed that it has been watched by their local Representatives in that spirit, in its earlier stages at all events. But even in the north, where the standard of civilization is much more advanced and the people are more ripe for regeneration, His Majesty's Legation must, I think, be beginning to despair at the continued prevalence of administrative chaos and the absence of all effective government. In the south I confess I have seen no result from the national movement and the attempt at constitutional government which has been otherwise than subversive of law and order, and generally paralyzing both to the administration and to commerce.

Thus the authority of local Governors has been altogether undermined by it. Provided as they now are with altogether inadequate pay, they are obliged to resort to all sorts of devices to obtain funds, and there has consequently been no cessation of corrupt methods of government, the only apparent difference being that the local official now lacks the practical personal authority to govern which he possessed before. Under the old régime, so long as he paid the revenue assessment regularly and complaints from his province were not too overwhelming, no questions were asked, and he was left to drive his own coach. Under the new conditions, including the existence of a free press and the right of public meeting, whenever a local Governor attempts to assert his authority in an effective and deterrent manner, some individual with a private grudge or an axe to grind, or one of the numerous Societies which have sprung up forthwith, dispatches a telegram to the Parliament or inspires a scurrilous article in the vernacular press, and a day or two later the Governor receives a telegram from Tehran asking for information and report. Our present Persian Representative at Bushire, the Derya Begi, who on the whole has proved the most effective and conciliatory Governor we have had, has repeatedly of late expressed his exasperation at the humiliating position to which he has been reduced, and at the impossibility of exercising effective authority under existing conditions.

The result is that the province of Fars and Persian Baluchistan (and Kermanshah for that matter) are in a state of lawlessness and administrative chaos which has not been equalled for generations, and under present conditions it is difficult to conceive how things can be righted or prevented from going from going bad to worse except by foreign intervention in some form. Our commercial interests are most immediately affected in the matter of communications. Brigandage has been rife on the chief trade routes, i.e., Bushire-Shiraz and Bunder Abbas-Kerman for two years past. The

forwarding of goods has been repeatedly stopped altogether and trade with the interior brought to a standstill. Trade has, in fact, been paralyzed, and cases of bankruptcy among the native merchants in trading relations with British firms have been of almost daily occurrence.

As regards the Shiraz route some little hope has, indeed, been inspired by the appointment of the Zil-es-Sultan, but conditions on the Kerman route are still as bad as they can be.

7. There is one other direction in which the changed conditions of government in Tehran have affected our interests adversely, namely, in their bearing upon the administration of the customs.

When the Tariff of 1903 and the Belgian Administration were first inaugurated the Government of India will remember that for a long time afterwards a good deal of difficulty was experienced by political officers owing to the aggressive attitude of some of the inexperienced Belgians with whom they had to deal. As time progressed, however, a working *modus vivendi* was gradually arrived at, by concessions made on both sides, and within the sphere of my post at all events, relations with the Belgian régime had much improved at the epoch at which the introduction of Parliamentary government took place. From the first, however, the attitude of the popular party was most hostile to M. Naus and his Belgian staff, and the position of the latter has since been a difficult and precarious one in consequence.

On the one hand, while under M. Naus' régime the local Directors were allowed to engage Bagdadis, Chaldeans, and Armenians as clerks or subordinates, and found that they were better served by these than by Persians, they are now under orders to entertain Persians wherever possible. Persians are being employed also in the higher grades, such as the Directorship of Lingah. The type of Persian which the Department gets, especially those sent from the north, is of the partially or sometimes highly educated newspaper-reading class, which has been most influenced by the nationalist propaganda preached therein and most intrinsically hostile to the presence of foreigners in any Department of the Persian Government. These men naturally work against their Belgian superiors, and the position of the latter has become so unpalatable that resignations and departures on leave pending retirement have been rife during the past year, and include the men who have been most conciliatory in their relations with us. The truth is that under the old régime if they wanted a reasonably quiet time they had to curry favour with the Russians or ourselves; now they have to conciliate the Medjliss and vernacular papers, which lose no opportunity of making things uncomfortable for them.

On the other hand, owing to the great financial straits to which the Central Government is reduced, the Customs Directors are constantly being pressed to submit more copious funds to the capital and in order to increase their receipts and meet such demands, they have had recourse to the strict application of many items of the Règlement which they have before allowed to become a dead letter or had interpreted liberally after learning by experience that they were unsuited to the peculiar conditions of commerce in the harbourless Gulf ports. We now seem to be gradually drifting back to the unpleasant relations of three years ago, and at present the British trader has not only to contend with every conceivable difficulty and risk which the insecurity of the trade routes and the uncontrolled licence of tufangchis can provide, but is being daily harassed at the ports by some harsh decision or the new or revived interpretation of some catchpenny clause in the Règlement.

8. Having in the foregoing paragraphs placed before Government in the light which it presents itself to me the general situation existing within the sphere of my post, I now have the honour with much respect to suggest means which, short of armed intervention for the protection of our interests, seem likely in my judgment to strengthen our hands. I will record them in the same order as the subjects above indicated with which they are connected.

9. *The possible withdrawal of the Russian Consulate, Bunder Abbas.*—If I remember right His Majesty's Legation, before the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement, did draw the attention of the Russian Legation to M. Ovseenko's demeanour towards our Consulate and interests, and Sir Cecil Spring-Rice expressed to me incidentally the opinion or the hope that the Czar's Government could hardly retain him at Bunder Abbas after the conclusion of the negotiations. Nevertheless, he still retains his post. I am aware, however, that it would be difficult to formulate specific charges against him which could, if necessary, be substantiated by direct proof, but perhaps His Majesty's Government would consider the feasibility of sounding the Russian Ambassador as to whether his Government intend to maintain their present arrangements at Bunder Abbas, where their interests are now exiguous.

10. *Appointment of a British Vice-Consul at Lingah.*—Owing in a great measure to the supineness and excessive caution of our own merchants it will be seen that Messrs. Wonekhaus, through their energetic employé, Mr. Brown, have acquired a very firm footing in Lingah. Moreover, they are already, I believe, doing a good deal of business with the Trucial Coast, through their friend, Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh; the latter being agent for the Bombay Persian Steam Navigation Company, whose steamers ply there with more or less regularity. I have done my best to induce Messrs. Gray Paul to improve their representation at Lingah, where they have hitherto entrusted their interests to a useless native agent, and they now assure me that they will endeavour to make some better arrangement. I do not, however, expect much from them, and in my view it is important that Government should appoint a British officer as Vice-Consul at that port who would lay himself out both to work up the trade of the port and at the same time to counteract the personal influence of Messrs. Wonekhaus' representative who now has the field to himself. Our present Residency Agent, Khan Sahib Agha Bedr, who is an excellent specimen of his class and the best native agent we have had, looks after British subjects and protected persons with much zeal and energy, but he cannot be of much service in regard to trade questions. He only receives a salary of 50 rupees per mensem, and I recommend that he be maintained where he is as native assistant to the Consular officer, who could employ him most usefully to work up influence in the Lar and Bastak districts, which are supplied from Lingah, and to which the Germans will certainly turn their attention if they have not already. The appointment of a British officer might be considered tentative for two or three years.

Regarding the mother o' pearl trade from Lingah, which has proved the making of the German firm, I am addressing Government separately.

11. *The Policing of the Trade Routes.*—Has it been finally decided by His Majesty's Government that, except the step be forced on them, in order to save the lives of Englishmen in Persia, they will not embark on any scheme for the policing of the Bushire-Shiraz and Bander Abbas-Kerman routes, either that advocated by Mr. Grahame or any modification of it?

12. *Revision of Customs Tariff and "Règlement" of 1903.*—The fundamental condition on which this Tariff was accepted was that all other transit dues and imposts should be abolished, but it is now upwards of four years since the Tariff was introduced, and yet "rahdari" in one form or another, and other illegal imposts are persistently levied. It is not only a fact that the Central Government has no practical power to stop them, but they still include the income from various illegal taxes in the official schedule of revenue which they call upon local Governors to collect.

The continual representations of this Residency and His Majesty's Legation have no result, a levy is merely taken off to-day and imposed to-morrow.

Then, again, the heavy duty imposed on certain classes of goods, such as tea, coffee, has created a colossal system of organized smuggling throughout the Persian littoral, with which the Persian Government are entirely unable to cope, and which nothing but a reversion to a reasonable all-round *ad valorem* Tariff or an organized system of coastguard will stop. This smuggling industry is obviously extremely damaging to the interests of legitimate trade. An honest trader at the ports naturally cannot do business when the wares in which he deals can be bought for 10 or 15 per cent. less a few miles outside the port if not actually in it.

I respectfully ask if it is necessary that we continue indefinitely to allow our traders to be increasingly oppressed at the ports by the harsh application of an inflated Tariff only accepted on specific terms, which the Persian Government make no attempt to fulfil and could not if they would.

Now that we have settled our differences with Russia, would it not be possible to get them to agree to its abrogation in favour of an all-round 7½ or 8 per cent. *ad valorem* duty, a change which would render smuggling a useless risk and increase the revenue at the same time?

13. *An Examination of the Arrangement under which His Majesty's ships "Sphinx," "Lapwing," and "Redbreast" are subsidized for Service in the Persian Gulf.*—We have now had nearly four years' experience of the working of this arrangement, and while cordially appreciating the complete co-operation and support which I have received from his Excellency Sir George Warrender and his predecessor Sir Edmund Poë, I realize that the Naval Commander-in-chief cannot perform impossibilities, and am of opinion that if present conditions are to continue, as it seems likely that they will, the requirements of the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf proper, and the Shatt-el-Arab cannot be adequately met by three vessels now subsidized. Even at normal times, taking into

account their minimum periods of absence for necessary service purposes, such as recommissioning, redocking and fitting and occasional and very necessary changes of air and scene for the officers and crews, it is clearly very hard for three ships to do the work required of them without undue strain; and if the concentration of ships on the Mekran coast in the winter months in connection with the arms traffic is to continue, the needs of the northern part of the Gulf will suffer greatly. At the present time, moreover, owing to the absence of any settled or effective Government in Tehran His Majesty's Legation is perforce not in a position in connection with incidents arising in the Gulf to obtain satisfaction in Tehran by ordinary diplomatic means, and as His Majesty's Government, for reasons which I well understand, have decided to refrain for the present from taking any drastic steps for asserting our position, it follows that, as in the recent case of the ill-treatment of a Bahreini at Lingah, I shall have to depend chiefly for maintaining our interests and good name in these waters upon what can be effected locally with the means ordinarily available. It is very necessary therefore that I should not be deprived of the fortifying presence of one of His Majesty's ships, within easy reach during the cold weather.

14. *The Extension of Cable Communication in the Persian Gulf.*—The proposal to connect Koweit and Bahrein with Bushire by cable or wireless installation is, I venture to hope, receiving favourable consideration. It would be a great advantage to connect up Lingah at the same time, or at all events British Bassidu with Hengam, Bassidu being within easy reach of Lingah. It would seem important also that His Majesty's subsidized ships should be fitted with wireless as soon as possible.

15. *Improved Representation on the Trucial Coast.*—The experience of the last two or three years makes me doubt whether it is safe to leave these backward Sheikhs longer in the charge of a native agent. I shall shortly address Government a separate communication on the subject.

16. I have now mentioned the several means which in my view would materially promote our interests in this region. While doing so I quite realise that it may not be possible for Government to give lively consideration to them *en bloc*; at the same time I opine that the present junction is one at which our interests and future policy must necessarily be subjected to examination and discussion, and it may therefore be convenient that such measures as seem locally important and desirable should be on record before Government for such consideration as may be possible.

A copy of this communication is being forwarded to His Majesty's Legation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major,
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

[26813]

No. 255.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 168.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 14, 1908.

IN reply to your despatch No. 82, Confidential, of the 21st May last, requesting information regarding the Concession for motor-trains in Persia, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of the Concession granted by the late Shah in 1906 to a group of Persian Notables.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 255.

Concession for Roads and "Train Renard," granted July 22, 1906.

(Translation.)

CONCESSION for "train Renard" and "train Escont" and *chaussée* and carriage road between Tehran and Meshed, and from Meshed to Seistan, Turbat, Turshiz, and between Tehran, Kermanshah, and Khanikin, excepting that for which Concessions have already been granted, and for a place half way on the Khorassan road to Bender Gez and Doshakh, on condition that the Concession has not been granted to others, and from Ispahan to Bushire and from Tehran to Mazanderan.

[1599]

2 P

Article 1. His Majesty the Shah gives the Concession for the above "train Renard" and "train Escout," and permits its institution in the interior [of Persia] upon all the carriageable roads in Persia to the following persons:—

	Shares.
His Highness Ain-ed-Dowleh	2
His Excellency Mushir-ed-Dowleh	1
His Highness Farman Farma	1
His Excellency Amir Behadur Jang	1
His Excellency Sepahdar	1
His Excellency Haji Nasser-es-Sultaneh	1
Haji Amin-uz-Zerb	1
Muin-ut-Tujjar	1

Art. 2. The period of Concession is seventy-five solar years from date of signature.

Tolls.

Art. 3. The making of the roads is to be undertaken by the concessionnaires. When each road is finished, the Government will send their engineers to inspect, and wherever the road is completed between two important places the right to levy tolls will be accorded.

Art. 4. The concessionnaires are free to purchase and sell trains and to institute a Company, and to sell one-quarter of their shares to foreigners. Regarding the Concession for road building, they are also permitted to form a Company, and may, according to a separate document which has been approved by the Government, sell one-quarter of their shares to foreigners, but they have not the right to transfer either the trains or road Concession to foreigners.

Postal Transport.

Art. 5. Whenever these trains are working, the Government will send posts by the train, on condition that no previous arrangement has been made with others. After expiration of all previous postal contracts, the post will be sent by the trains. The concessionnaires must accept the transport of posts at half the usual rates.

Art. 6. Freedom from customs duties for the trains and their accessories.

Art. 7. In case Government wishes to have railways built in Persia, this Company will have prior rights on equal terms with others, excepting on lines upon which others already have similar rights.

Should the Government not desire to give the Company permission to build a railway on a road upon which a "train" already runs, and wish to give the Concession to another Company, the latter must buy the trains, the stations, and accessories of this Company; and should another Company build a railway before the Concession is given, the opposite party (Railway Company) must come to terms with this Company, and pay a sum the yearly interest of which, at the rate of 5 per cent., will be equivalent to the profits of the road.

The Shah to Travel by Trains Free.

Art. 8. Should His Imperial Majesty wish to travel on a line upon which a train runs, the concessionnaires must supply a train free for His Imperial Majesty and 100 followers.

Troops to Pay.

Art. 9. Should the Government wish to send troops by these trains they must pay the ordinary rates.

Importation of Factory Free.

Art. 10. Should the Company desire to import into Persia a factory for the building of this train it will be permitted to do so, and will not pay customs duties, or "malat."

Roads to be Made: Minimum Width 5 Metres.

Art. 11. The Company is at liberty to make the above-mentioned roads carriageable, so that carriages, carts, and these trains should pass over them easily, and the

breadth should not be less than 5 metres anywhere, and they must build suitable bridges, and as many bridges as are necessary over water-conduits for irrigation and cultivation along the road which are built by the Company will be chargeable to the landowners, according to the valuation of experts.

Crown Domains, &c. Land necessary for Road.

Art. 12. If these roads traverse Crown domains, the road will be allowed to traverse free, and also the building of halting-places, guest-houses, and stations will be free of cost.

If the concessionnaires should require Crown domains, that necessary will be given free by the Government on condition that the site in each place will not exceed 5,000 zars; and wherever along the road there should be Government forests near, they will be at liberty to cut wood from the forests for the building of bridges, &c., free of cost, on condition that the Concession for such forests has not already been given to others; and if the road and station fall in the properties of private owners they will be bought with the help of the Government.

Imports for Road Free of Duty.

Art. 13. That which is necessary for the building of the road to be imported from abroad will be free from customs duties, but the Customs have the right to inspect all the goods arriving for the Company, and to pass free of duty all machinery and necessary accessories, but to charge on any merchandize.

Periods Fixed for Termination of Work.

Art. 14. The concessionnaires are to work in Persia at least ten trains within two years from the date below, but it is stipulated that at first two trains will be imported, and if the Government should see that this train is not profitable they will be excused from importing the other trains. They will also begin making the roads within a year from this date, and after seven years all the roads above mentioned must be made carriageable, otherwise . . . they will be cancelled from the conditions of this Concession. For the Bushire road they must begin in one year, and it must be finished within five years from the date of this Concession.

Tolls.

Art. 15. Tolls on these roads for carts and animals will not be more than on the Resht road, the list of which will form part of this Concession.

Military and Government Transport Free.

Art. 16. Government troops and military appurtenances will be entirely free from toll, as also carriages, carts, and transport belonging to Government, and goods belonging to Government, such as arms, &c., which will be free of toll.

Government Officials pay Half Tolls.

Art. 17. Government officials on Government duty will pay half tolls.

Road Guards.

Art. 18. Government road guards will look after the preservation of order on the roads for their Government salary.

Injury—Compensation.

Art. 19. Should the road be injured by any person, the Government will inquire into it and make arrangements for compensation.

Fifteen Years Free of Taxation, after Fifteen Years 10 per cent.

Art. 20. The Government will free these roads and trains for fifteen years from all taxation; after fifteen years the Company will pay the Government 10 per cent. of the net profits.

Inspection of Accounts.

Art. 21. The Government has the right, after fifteen years, to look into the Company's accounts yearly, and will appoint a suitable official to inspect the Company's accounts, and the Company must show this official their accounts and books, and will pay half his salary.

Employment of Foreigners.

Art. 22. Not more than fifty foreigners may be employed by the Company as engineers and mechanics, and these must be sent away as their employment becomes no longer imperative.

Communications near towns Free of Toll.

Art. 23. Communications between each town and the surroundings will be free of toll.

(In the Shah's handwriting.)

This pamphlet is correct. At the Castle of Sahibkeranieh, in the month of Jemadi-ul-Awvel 1324 (A. H.), Yuntil, June-July 1906.

Copy in conformity with original Concession, the original of which is in the keeping of Haji Amin-uz-Zerb.

The month of Rejeb-el-Murajeb 1324 (A. H.), August-September 1906.

(Sealed) MUSHIR-ED-DOWLEH.

This pamphlet, which is adorned with His Imperial Majesty's rescript, and has been registered in the register of the Foreign Ministry, has been seen and is correct. (22nd July, 1906) 29th of the month of Jemadi-ul-Awvel, 1324 (A. H.).

(Sealed) Sultan ABD-UL-MAJID.
AIN-ED-DOWLEH.
MUSHIR-ED-DOWLEH.

[26815]

No. 256.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 170.)
Sir,

Gulabek, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE repeated to you certain telegrams which have reached me from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez regarding the events which have taken place in that city during the last three weeks. These reports have contained the more important items of news, but, in view of the many conflicting rumours which have been current in regard to the disturbances at that place, and the extreme difficulty there is to obtain a connected account of what has actually happened, I venture to submit to you a short summary of all the reports which Mr. Stevens has sent me, and which will, I trust, enable you to form an opinion of the present situation.

These reports would, in the ordinary course, have found their place in the usual monthly summary, but the importance of Tabreez as a centre of political opinion, and the fact that there alone, among the provincial cities of Persia, popular feeling has been to any extent roused by recent events in the capital have decided me to treat the subject in a separate despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 256.

Summary of Reports respecting Persia from Mr. Stevens.

ON the 23rd ultimo Tabreez was much disturbed, and the bazaars were closed. Reports of the events in Tehran were received during the day, and fighting commenced between the Shah's partisans, headed by the priests, and the Constitutionalists. The bazaars remained closed during the three following days, and fighting continued until, on the 27th, both sides agreed to meet to discuss terms of peace. The appointment was not kept by the Shah's party, who were accused by the Constitutionalists of having killed and mutilated two Constitutionalists. One mutilated body was brought to His Majesty's Consulate in proof of the barbarity of reactionary methods, and was afterwards placed in a mosque. In revenge the Constitutionalists killed the brother of the chief priest, who had been taken prisoner by them. Fighting continued, and robberies of innocent passers by roughs were general.

On the 28th six of the revolutionaries took bast in the Russian Consulate-General, and many others applied for admittance to His Majesty's Consulate, which was refused.

The Russian Consul-General endeavoured by negotiations with both sides to restore peace, but his efforts were attended with little success until, on the 30th, a force of Karadji Dagb horsemen, sent by the Shah to restore order, appeared outside the town. On the same day Mukhbir-es-Sultaneh, the Governor-General, took refuge in the French Consulate, Ain-ed-Dowleh being appointed to succeed him. Fighting continued in various quarters of the town, and on the 1st July four leaders of the revolutionaries demanded British protection, threatening to continue fighting and to prevent the cavalry from entering the town to restore order unless they received it. His Majesty's Vice-Consul applied for instructions, and was instructed to refuse protection, in accordance with the resolution of His Majesty's Government to abstain from intervention in the internal affairs of Persia. (Telegram No. 180 of the 1st July to the Foreign Office.)

In the meantime the Russian Consul-General succeeded in persuading the revolutionaries to hoist white flags in sign of surrender, and allow the cavalry to enter the town. Shortly after the Shah's party advanced, looting houses and shops. The Constitutionalists thereupon decided to continue the struggle, and commenced reassembling their forces. The Russian Consul-General's efforts to restore order were fruitless, and fighting and looting of shops and houses by either side continued until the 10th instant, when some troops arrived from Tehran, who tried on the two succeeding days to induce the people to open the bazaars. Their attempts, however, were attended with little success, as they were followed closely by bands of nationalists, who frightened every one, and ordered such as had opened their shops to close them.

During the whole of the disorders bread had been becoming increasingly scarce, and it was only on the 12th instant that wheat began coming into the town, and a few of the shops remained open.

On the morning of the 13th instant Serdar Rahim Khan entered the town with about 1,000 horsemen and three cannon. Before his entry some revolutionaries had delivered to him one cannon and a few rifles. A party of 100 revolutionaries behind barricades opposed the Government forces, and firing continued all day. All roads to the town were guarded by cavalry, who had orders to allow no one to enter or leave.

On the following day His Majesty's Vice-Consul reported that the Government troops had been unable to dislodge the revolutionaries, who had increased in numbers. Four cannon shots had been fired without inflicting much damage.

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No. 257.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 174.)
Sir,

Gulabek, July 15, 1908.

I DULY communicated to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz the contents of the Persian Transport Company's letter of the 13th March last, copy of which you were so good as to forward in your despatch No. 43 of the 23rd March last, and instructed that officer to inform the Bakhtiari Khans of the repairs which the Company proposed to carry out on the Godar Bridge.

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Captain Lorimer has recently informed me by telegram from Isfahan that the necessary communication has been made in writing to the Khans, but that no reply has as yet been received from their Excellencies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

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No. 258.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 175.)
Sir,

Gulshah, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Isfahan transmitting a report by the Acting British Vice-Consul at Yezd on the recent agitation in that town, which resulted in a large number of persons taking refuge in the Vice-Consulate as a protest against the imposition of certain taxation by the Central Government.

Mr. Blackman's account is marked by considerable self-restraint, and omits reference to incidents such as that when two men, smeared with petroleum, set themselves on fire and three others threw themselves down from a minaret in frenzied desperation, a brief account of which I had the honour to submit in the monthly summary forwarded by last bag (my despatch No. 163 of the 13th June). It would be wearisome to recount the series of representations which I made daily to the Persian Government during a period of nearly three weeks, but I venture to recommend to your notice the admirable way in which Mr. Blackman has conducted himself in circumstances extremely trying and accompanied by great personal inconvenience, and I should be glad to be authorized to convey to him the appreciation of His Majesty's Government of his excellent services.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 258.

Acting Consul-General Aganoor to Mr. Marling.

(No. 13.)
Sir,

Isfahan, July 2, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith despatch No. 21 of the 19th June, 1908, from the Vice-Consul at Yezd on the subject of the recent agitation in that town against the imposition of certain taxes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. S. P. AGANOOR.

Inclosure 2 in No. 258.

Vice-Consul Blackman to Acting Consul-General Aganoor.

(No. 21.)
Sir,

Yezd, June 19, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report on the invasion of this Vice-Consulate and telegraph office by a crowd of villagers and others, headed by Haji Mullah Reza Maibudi, as a means of gaining their end in an agitation against the imposition of unlawfully superimposed taxes.

2. In my despatch No. 9 of the 27th February last (and Nos. 10 and 11, dated the 11th and 22nd March, in continuation) I had the honour to bring to notice the application of a number of persons who were agitating this question to take sanctuary here, and of my reply to them. Further, in my despatch No. 18, dated the 25th April, I mentioned the Entezam-ul-Mulk's (Governor of Yezd) connection with the Mushir-ul-Mama'ek, and remembering that the Mushir has long been a thorn in the side of the Yezdis, I had my suspicions that all would not be well, and constantly searched for information, but could get no more than qualified assertions that the Yezdis would fight; and thus, when the Governor sent out to demand the payment of last year's arrears, I was curious, but not altogether unprepared for an agitation, without knowing what form it would take.

3. Having Mr. Marling's despatch dated the 1st March, 1908, to guide me, when

a messenger sent in advance by Haji Mullah Reza to demand sanctuary here arrived on the morning of the 14th May, I informed him of His Britannic Majesty's Government's policy in such cases, and stated that as there was no accommodation here for a crowd it had better go elsewhere, and adding that I was keeping the doors closed, but would dispose of any telegrams the leaders might choose to hand in (as paid telegrams). Notwithstanding this, the crowd arrived about an hour later, shouting and beating breasts, and was not at all pleased to find itself kept outside. The leaders, however, came in and demanded sanctuary, with other demands quite out of the question, such as tents and provisions for the lot. After considerable deliberation they decided to go to the shrine of Shah Zadeh Fauzel and thence send telegraphic petitions to Tehran. The crowd came up daily till Saturday evening, the 16th, when I had occasion to pay a return call on a passing traveller, and, supposing the crowd would not trouble us any more that day, was absent for about two hours. On returning to the vicinity of the office, however, I found the crowd there, and was mobbed and nearly pulled off my horse, whilst during my absence the Armenian lad on duty and my wife had been terrified by threats based on an assertion that I was not absent, but hiding myself inside. The real leader, Haji Mullah Reza Maibudi, was at the time keeping himself in the background, and a firebrand village Seyed, with other hot-headed villagers, generally headed the crowd and voiced its demands in no very measured terms. After the crowd had cleared away it was found that one of the iron bars of the message window had been torn out and others badly bent.

4. During the following week the leaders kept the crowd away except on two occasions, but that agitation continued, and people were beginning to get exasperated at receiving no reply to their petitions, and the leaders to be fearful of the result of the detention in the town of the deputation from Taft, the villagers of which, as may have been gathered from former reports, bear an unenviable reputation for disorderly conduct, and are always ready to seize the slightest opportunity to enrich themselves at other people's expense. During the same period the detachment of about fifty soldiers of the Kerman regiment, which had provided guards for such buildings in Yezd as required them, had been taking sanctuary in the house of Sheikh Muhammad Zafar Muhtabed against the stoppage of their rations from Norooz, non-supply of new clothing, and non-payment of their pay since they left Kerman several months ago.

5. Two of the four soldiers on guard here, however, in consideration of the ration money paid by the Telegraph Department, had hitherto remained behind, whilst the two others joined their comrades daily; but on the morning of Sunday, the 24th May, all of them, excepting a sick one, went off without informing any one, and while the "ferrash" who was on duty was busy sweeping inside, a small party of the crowd, headed by some Seyeds, entered the office porch and, finding the inner doors open, sat down on the step with the intention of keeping them so. I was busy at the time with the weekly test of the lines, but left it and went to see what had happened. Finding the Seyeds in the position stated, I pushed them into the porch and closed and fastened the doors behind them, and hurried back to my testing. In a few minutes more, however, the crowd forced the doors open and streamed in. I beg to refer you to the attached copies of my letter to the Entezam-ul-Mulk, Governor of Yezd, informing him of the crowd's threat to break in and his reply.

6. There is no need to recapitulate the daily doings of the crowd, the villagers of which seemed to come and go in relays, and who stayed in the office at night, whilst the townspeople generally went home. The leaders, who took possession of the rest room upstairs and roof, remained there permanently, and also demanded that some of the downstairs rooms should be cleared and handed over to them. For the first few days the people contented themselves with the shade of the trees in the compound, and then the leaders became very importunate in the demand for tents, which, as I only complied to a very limited extent, they obtained outside and brought in and pitched on the tennis court of the Yezd Club, besides two awnings downstairs and one on the roof. The policy of the leaders was to keep the crowd within bounds, and as they were well aware that the Ministers in Tehran, having played them false last summer (*vide* Mr. Baggaley's despatch No. 28, dated the 1st August, 1907), were not likely to comply with their demands willingly, and that we did not wish to mix ourselves up in the matter, they intended to worry and annoy us here as much as possible by all means in their power short of actual violence, and, in fact, to exhaust the resources of the "peaceful persuasion" recently legalized in strikes in England. One method adopted the first two or three nights was to start shouting "salawat" about bed-time, to keep it up for an hour or so, and recommence at intervals during the night, whilst another section started calling to prayers about 4 A.M., after which sleep was out of the

question. On the second or third night a party came and stamped on the roof of my bedroom for about an hour. However, the leaders soon tired of these nocturnal sports, and they soon ceased. A pulpit was brought, and the crowd harangued every evening. The refusal to allow the opening of the telegraph office on the morning of the 5th instant, and the avowed intention to forcibly close the local branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia and seize the manager were merely part of the programme; and so far as the leaders were concerned, the latter would have been quite harmless affairs, but the danger to be apprehended was that the occasion would be too good a one for the Yezd and Tatti roughs to lose, and that it would have given rise to far graver difficulties than the leaders imagined or desired. (The manager of the bank informed me that the Governor verbally offered to keep the bank open, but that his ability to do so was doubtful with the small force at his command, besides which there was the possibility of grave after consequences.) In answer to my exposition of the methods of obtaining redress in a constitutional country, the leaders replied that such methods were all right in Europe, but were not in working order here: that they had been trying to obtain redress by such methods for over a year past, and in despair had come here with the intention of sticking here till their demands should be settled. The morning that the crowd got in here another section went and interviewed the Persian Telegraph Superintendent and completely terrified him by threats of what it would do if he continued to send opposition messages, and he was only absolved by taking a solemn oath that he had not done so. He afterwards wrote to me stating that the crowd had told him I had told them so, and demanding my reasons for doing so, to which I replied the crowd were in error in saying so. Of the general truth of the crowd's assertion there can be no doubt—in fact, it was the Superintendent's plain duty to send such telegrams if offered.

7. The only really critical time during the whole period the crowd was here was when the Governor started preparations to come here to arrest some of the leaders. Just before noon on that day a Naini of no particular standing came to me with a message from the Governor stating that, as his orders in connection with the opening of the bazaar were being nullified by the villagers sallying out from here and forcing the shopkeepers to close, with my permission, he intended to come or send and arrest some of the leaders. To this I replied that, as the Governor had taken no steps to prevent the crowd entering, although I had applied to him to do so, now that it was in, he could not enter to arrest any member of it, and that I could not give him permission to do so. During the afternoon several private messages reached the leaders informing them that the Governor was completing his preparations to come and forcibly take them during the evening, and about 5 p.m. a deputation waited on me to inform me that in any case they were prepared to resist, and intended to shoot from the roof of the office any sowars who showed themselves in the street, but requesting me to do what I could to avoid a collision. Seeing that what the Governor proposed to do amounted to an armed invasion of the Vice-Consulate, I thought it my duty to address him, asking him if he had such intentions; if so, was he acting under orders from Tehran, and, in the latter case, would he favour me with a sight of such orders so that I might communicate with His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires and obtain his instructions. The Governor, in reply, evaded my questions as per copies of letters attached. The present Governor, never having held such a post before, has little idea of international courtesy and rights, and I would therefore beg to urge the desirability of some special notice being taken by the Central Government of his intention to invade this Vice-Consulate.

8. In conclusion, I beg to inform you that the crowd which was here never probably at any one time amounted to more than from 2,000 to 3,000, and that the leaders greatly exaggerated in this respect probably tenfold. At the same time, the generality of the agitation is proved by my having at different times spoken to people from Bafk, Shah-i-Babek, Mehriz, Deh Baha, Ardakan, and many intervening villages. There was never any danger for the staff, but the inconvenience caused was very considerable. I myself suffered considerable personal inconvenience, being forced to send my wife and child elsewhere and put up with a good deal of curiosity in my own rooms; also by being debarred from following up my work in a regular manner it has fallen greatly in arrears, as has also the work of shifting the present telegraph-office to more salubrious quarters near the Bank Manager's house.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EG. BLACKMAN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 258.

Vice-Consul Blackman to Governor of Yezd.

AT noon to-day a person came to the Vice-Consulate from your Excellency with a message, but, on account of the confusion here at the time, I did not entirely grasp his meaning. Apparently he was saying that your Excellency thinks of coming and removing the refugees from the Vice-Consulate by force. I was much surprised at this, and did not believe it, but, if it be true, and your Excellency has received orders on the subject from Tehran, will you kindly favour me with a sight of them, so that I may obtain the instructions of His Britannic Majesty's Minister in the matter.

Sent to Governor about 5 p.m.

(Initialled) EG. B.

Inclosure 4 in No. 258.

Governor of Yezd to Vice-Consul Blackman.

(Translation.)

YOUR letter received and read, and I am much surprised that a civilized official should write such a strong letter. I should like to know if, since my arrival at Nain, you have experienced other than consideration and kindness from me: tell me when I have treated you otherwise than with friendship and I am ready to do penance; but if you allow yourself to be guided by interested agitators, I know my own place; you do not know these agitators, and every one is liable to be deceived; please do not listen to these people. I have no other wish than the good of the Government of this country, and if the leaders of these people will only put their own particular interests on one side and act justly, every one knows that I have always tried to act kindly to all and have harmed no one.

Briefly, if these people will not cause disturbances, will not go to the bazaar and upset people and despoil their goods, will not go to the houses of our venerated priests and respected merchants, and not use bad language and vituperation in the way they are being taught to do by people who demand, and not petition for, their rights, I shall have nothing whatever to say to them.

In a friendly way, however, I request you to tell these people to abandon their evil ways, and to inform them that if they have a petition for, and need anything from, the Government, the way to obtain it is not by rushing every day to the bazaar, breaking the doors of the shops, and pillaging their contents, and dishonouring honourable men.

I am always ready to further your Excellency's wishes.

Sealed on envelope—

ENTEZAM-UL-MULK.

[26821]

No. 259.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 176.)
Sir,

Gulnabad, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following Report, in continuation of the narrative of events connected with the recent *coup d'État* commenced in my despatch No. 161 of the 18th June.

On that day and the two following days, the "Anjumens" appeared to be plucking up a little spirit, while the Assembly, nervously anxious to preserve peace and give no excuse to the Shah to use forcible measures, was trying to persuade them. Constant *pourparlers* passed between the Ministers and the Assembly on the one hand, and the Court at Bagh-i-Shah on the other; and, according to M. de Hartwig, who appears to have been kept almost hourly informed of what passed at the Shah's camp, while the rest of the world has found it practically impossible to learn anything whatever, an arrangement was finally agreed on and signed by all the Ministers under which, according to the same authority, some eight or ten persons who had been particularly violent in their attacks on the Shah, were to be surrendered to His Majesty. As late as the morning of the 22nd instant, M. de Hartwig assured me that this arrangement

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would certainly be accepted by the Assembly; and, in fact, he was still maintaining the view that the Parliament was loyal to the Shah, and that the agitation against His Imperial Majesty was solely the work of revolutionary Societies and the paid agitators of the Zil-es-Sultan and his fellow conspirators.

For my part, I doubt much whether the Ministers had at any time the smallest expectation of being able to persuade the Medjliss to accept the Shah's demands, but it was naturally impossible for them to represent to His Imperial Majesty the inevitable distrust entertained by the National Assembly of his sincerity, and they therefore agreed to undertake a mission which they knew to be hopeless from the beginning. Be this as it may, they failed signally in their task, and were even denounced as traitors and called upon to resign.

According to M. de Hartwig, Seyyid Abdullah was responsible for the rejection of the Shah's demands, as His Imperial Majesty had refused to pay the 30,000 tomans demanded as the price of the Mujtehid's support. I can hear nothing whatever to confirm this story, and, notorious as is the Seyyid's corruption, I doubt its veracity when all the circumstances of the moment are taken into consideration.

Debate on the demands put forward by the Court was very prolonged, and the Medjliss sat till a late hour before they were finally rejected. There seems to be little doubt that this result had been foreseen at Bagh-i-Shah, for ample preparations must have been made for the operations of the following day.

The accounts of the events of Tuesday, the 23rd June, are even more conflicting than usual in Persia, but the inclosed Memorandum given to Major Stokes by a journalist as Colonel Liakhoff's own description is probably substantially correct.

According to this account the Popular party was responsible for the first act of aggression, viz., the throwing of a bomb from the Assembly walls; but Persian accounts are almost unanimous in denying this. They concur in asserting that the leaders, and in particular, Seyyid Abdullah, had enjoined on the party to act strictly on the defensive and that the first shot was fired by a Cossack, possibly in the air, and that it was only after this that the "Anjumens" fired on the troops. The point, however, is of little real importance as it was clear that the Shah had decided to appeal to force.

As an instance of the kind of rumour in circulation I may mention an atrocious report that Colonel Liakhoff himself shot a couple of his men to produce the impression that they had been killed by shots from the Medjliss. I have little doubt that this abominable fabrication is widely believed among Persians.

I think there can be little doubt that the Russian officers were purposely never fired on. Persians all say that special injunctions were issued to that effect, and M. de Hartwig volunteered to me the statement that such was the impression of one Russian officer. Were it otherwise it seems incredible considering the short range and excellent cover which the Popular party enjoyed, that they should have escaped. All, moreover, exposed themselves fearlessly throughout the day and a Persian Deputy has told me that Colonel Liakhoff in particular could have been killed at almost any moment. Had they been killed I think it unquestionable that the struggle would have ended quite differently; but they owed their lives to the general conviction that their death would bring about Russian intervention. As it was they succeeded in keeping their men on the whole under wonderfully good restraint, for very few shops and scarcely any private houses, except those marked down for plunder, i.e., those of Zil-es-Sultan and Banon Ozma, were touched, and they undoubtedly prevented the Persian regiment of Silakhoris and Amir Behadur Jang's guard from committing the grossest excesses.

I received the first news of the struggle going on in Tehran rather before 7 A.M. and a couple of hours later went across to Zerguendeh to see M. de Hartwig who was, however, not yet dressed. He had, he said, received much the same news as myself, but argued that till we knew with more certainty what was going on we could not decide what to do. I called again at 12 and he agreed in a general way to send our dragomans down to Tehran to point out to the Shah the danger in which Europeans were placed. He would not, however, consent to immediate action. Even when I called about 3 he was so obviously anxious to put off any joint representations as long as possible that I was quite surprised when he agreed that in addition to urging that steps should be taken for the maintenance of security during the night our dragomans should remind the Shah of his assurances to respect the Constitution. But by 5 o'clock M. de Hartwig had probably received news from Colonel Liakhoff that the troops were masters of the town; and he was therefore quite at ease as to the safety of the foreign colony and indifferent what assurances we might ask of the Shah. At all events, when I further urged that the best means to restore confidence would be to convoke the Assembly at once, the Minister exclaimed: "What, ask His Majesty to convoke an Assembly, more than half

the members of which have just been firing on his troops." I observed that if Parliament was fighting against the Sovereign we could no longer talk of suppressing revolutionary Societies; the country was in a state of civil war. M. de Hartwig's statement as to the number of Deputies present at the attack on the Medjliss is, I believe, very much exaggerated. No independent account that I have been able to procure places it at above twenty, and there is nothing inconsistent with Persian habits that a few Deputies should after a late sitting have remained to sleep in the building, and their presence there may well have been quite accidental. M. de Hartwig's observation, however, appears to me to be significant: to justify strong measures he had till then invariably spoken of the Shah as fighting with a revolutionary conspiracy among the "Anjumens" to which Parliament was at least a stranger if not actually opposed, but now those measures having proved effective he was making out that Parliament was as rebellious as the "Anjumens" and must therefore not be reassembled so as to give time for the Constitution to be remodelled as had been the Duma in his own country.

To break off the discussion on this point M. de Hartwig sent to summon M. Baranowsky to give him his instructions. After some delay he appeared, and with some corrections from myself, M. de Hartwig told him what we had agreed on. I told M. de Hartwig that I should give Mr. Churchill written instructions. M. de Hartwig again tried to make quite unnecessary delays, but at last agreed that Mr. Churchill and M. Baranowsky should meet at His Majesty's Legation at 5 P.M. M. Baranowsky did not, however, put in an appearance till close on 6 o'clock. To explain this apparently intentional delay, I can only assume that M. de Hartwig had assured the Shah that no joint action would be made till His Majesty had been warned of its nature.

On the way from the Legation to Bagh-i-Shah Mr. Churchill showed the instructions I had given him to M. Baranowsky, who, as representing the senior Mission, was to act as spokesman, and who gave a faithful translation to the Shah. His Imperial Majesty gave every promise that no pillaging or disorders should take place, and special orders were given also for the protection of the Imperial Bank of Persia and of the Indo-European Telegraph Department's quarters, and for the safe escort of the clerks going to and from the Central Office on duty.

I inclose a Memorandum by Mr. Churchill, giving a most interesting account of the audience and of what he saw at Bagh-i-Shah.

Soon after receiving news of the events in town, I sent Major Stokes to town with instructions to see that no one should take refuge in the Legation unless in imminent danger of his life, and from time to time he sent me telephone messages of what was happening. His reports showed that a good deal of looting must be going on, as he saw soldiers, both of the Cossacks Brigade and the Persian Silakhor Regiment, returning in the direction of Bagh-i-Shah laden with plunder of the most varied description, even the gun-carriages being piled high with booty, while at a moment when he was actually using the telephone of a shop within a few yards of the Legation gates, four men of Amir Behadur's guard attempted to enter for purposes of plunder. As a matter of fact, however, comparatively few shops and private houses were pillaged, and most of the loot came from the huge Palace of Zil-es-Sultan and from the Medjliss building. The exterior of the former suffered but little, for Dr. Neligan, who went into Tebran to offer his services to the wounded, passed the gate, and though that was somewhat battered, he came away believing that the building within had been respected.

During the afternoon a considerable number of arrests were made among all classes of the population. The only names worth mentioning are those of the two great Mujteheds, Seyyid Abdullah and Seyyid Mohammed, Sheikh-ur-Reis, Musteshar-ed-Dowleh, the prominent reform leader and Deputy for Tabreez, the popular orator Malek-el-Mutakilimin, and Jehangir Khan, editor of the "Sur-i-Israfil," both of whom have been particularly obnoxious to the Shah from their unrestrained and frequently insulting and scurrilous attacks on His Majesty.

When he went to Bagh-i-Shah Mr. Churchill saw chained together some thirty ragged and bleeding men, but reports said that hundreds more were sent thither, and that wholesale executions were going on. It was perfectly certain that the Cossacks were making every effort to capture the leaders of the Nationalist party, the Chiefs of "Anjumens," and the best known editors of newspapers. All these rumours, combined with the events of the morning, and the belief that a Shah who had not hesitated to fire on a mosque would stop at no act of savagery, produced a state of panic in the town, and no man who had ever taken part, even in the humblest degree, in the constitutional movement thought his life safe.

There was no disturbance during the night, but early the next morning I received a hasty note from Major Stokes stating that Taki Zadeh and six friends, including the

editors of the *Habl-ul-Matin*, a paper which has distinguished itself by the virulence of its attacks on England, and of the "Musavat," had sought refuge at the Legation during the night. I will not stop here to give any details.

My note informing M. de Hartwig of what had occurred crossed one from him to me stating that several members of "Anjumens" were going to the Legation to take "bast," and that merchants and Seyyids in hired carriages, accompanied by Legation gholams, were also proceeding thither. I at once went to the Russian Legation and told M. de Hartwig that I knew as yet nothing of the circumstances under which Taki Zadeh and the others had been admitted, that I had sent down Major Stokes purposely to prevent the refugees coming into the Legation, and that I was convinced that he would conscientiously carry out the general instructions from His Majesty's Government on the subject of "bast," namely, that the Legation was to do everything to discourage it, and to admit no one except those in imminent danger. It was, of course, just possible that he might make an error of judgment, but I did not think it likely. I would go to Tehran at once myself, and would let him know what had occurred as soon as I could. I was quite confident that the story of the Legation gholams escorting refugees was quite untrue, and I had telephoned at once to Major Stokes absolutely to refuse all admittance.

On my return to the Legation I found a telephone message from town stating that some forty-three or forty-four persons had gained admittance that morning. On reaching Tehran about 2 o'clock I found that the feeling of general insecurity produced by the events of the day before had, if anything, been increased by the exaggerated stories of the raids of the Cossacks on private houses in search of suspects, whilst the news of the execution of two of the prisoners at Bagh-i-Shah had been magnified into tales of wholesale slaughter. Most of the shops, it is true, were open, but only in consequence of a Proclamation from the Shah that those who remained closed would be plundered by the soldiery. Very few people were moving about the town, but stood about their doors or shops anxiously and fearfully speculating on what the Shah might do next.

About 3:30 Muin-ul-Vezareh, the Foreign Minister's son and "Chef de Cabinet," came to the Legation with a message from the Shah. The substance of the message and of my reply and the Shah's answer were reported fully in my telegram No. 155 of the 25th June.

While we were speaking we heard the sound of rifle fire and, a few minutes later, of a gun within a short distance of the Legation, and Muin-ul-Vezareh explained that the Cossacks were attacking the house of Zahir-ed-Dowleh which had served as the headquarters of an "Anjumen" generally known by the same name. So far as I can learn, no resistance was made, but it was believed that bombs might be thrown from it. The operation must have lasted fully three-quarters of an hour for I heard the sounds of explosions after I had reached Ala-es-Sultaneh's house. There I again found Muin-ul-Vezareh, and, after I had repeated to him in his father's presence the message I desired to be conveyed to the Shah, he left for Bagh-i-Shah. Ala-es-Sultaneh, on his son's departure, spoke very freely on the situation. The *coup d'Etat* had been prepared and carried out at Russian instigation and by Russian agents. The Shah would never of himself have had the necessary courage and resolution, and even now was trembling with apprehension at the consequences of his action. Persia was now to be a Russian province and all this the result of the recent Anglo-Russian Agreement. "Did your Government," he asked, "really believe that Russia would respect the spirit of it? You are doing so, but are you now going to stand by and see Russia violate it in this manner?" I said that I thought his Excellency took an extreme view; the Shah had undoubtedly received excessive provocation from the Popular party who were quick enough to accuse him of violating the Constitution, but were perhaps scarcely less guilty in that respect than himself. His Majesty had no force he could depend upon but the Cossack Brigade, and was obliged to employ it. But the fact that the Brigade was officered by Russians did not justify his Highness in saying that Persia had become a Russian province. His Highness was, however, clearly, but little, impressed by the argument.

On returning to the Legation I noticed three or four mounted Cossacks posted across the road some 25 or 30 yards from the Legation on either side of the gateway, but, thinking it might be accidental, attached no particular importance to it. I am giving in another despatch a detailed account of the military surveillance of the Legation of which this was the first sign, and shall therefore as far as possible omit all mention of it in this despatch.

On the following day, Thursday, the 25th June, it was generally understood that

the policing of the town had been confided to Colonel Liakhoff and the Cossack Brigade, and the language which that officer held to Mr. Gye and Mr. Churchill when they called on him to endeavour to persuade him to withdraw the Cossacks posted about the Legation showed clearly that he regarded himself as *de facto* Governor of Tehran and as authorized to disregard any assurances given to a foreign Legation by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Proclamation of martial law under which he was appointed Governor-General of Tehran, though it bears the date of the 22nd June, i.e., the day before the attack on the Medjliss, did not, so far as I can learn, actually appear until the 26th.

From the inclosed translation made by Mr. Smart and checked by Abbas Kuli Khan and Mr. Churchill, it will be seen that, M. de Hartwig's explanations notwithstanding, Colonel Liakhoff was appointed Governor-General, with full powers over the police and military forces.

Colonel Liakhoff undoubtedly used the authority vested in him to good effect, for Tehran has not been so quiet by day and by night for the past six or seven months. But in another respect the Proclamation defeated its own ends by the very rigour of its terms, Article 5, in particular, providing that in cases of disrespect (the Persian word employed implies no more) to the military soldiers are authorized to use their arms, produced the worst effect. The people were terrified, for they felt that they were put at the mercy of any one who had a grudge to pay off, and it is this clause which has driven so many persons who were in no real danger whatever to seek asylum at the Legation. The town was quiet because it was cowed.

Meantime a Proclamation of general amnesty also appeared, I believe, on the 25th, but in spite of it arrests have been, and still are, constantly made. In fact, it has been looked on merely as intended to lure suspects from their hiding places.

On Monday, the 29th, a Proclamation, signed by Colonel Liakhoff himself, was posted up all over the town. It was superseded only on the 6th July by a motion signed by Mushir-es-Sultaneh, the Prime Minister, explaining that Prince Moayed-ed-Dowleh was Civil Governor and Colonel Liakhoff Military Governor. Translations of both these documents are inclosed.

On the 7th July a further Proclamation was issued by Prince Moayed-ed-Dowleh, dated the 5th July, in which it is stated that, though it is necessary to continue military law in the town, the Civil Government would be carried on by him, and inviting all persons having civil suits to refer to him within certain hours. It is further explained that the former prohibition as to gatherings does not prevent people going to the mosques to pray.

The following day a rescript addressed by the Shah to the Prime Minister was placarded about the town ordering him to concert measures of reform with his colleagues, with special reference to education, the fostering of commerce, and the institution of factories. The rescript also orders that the Finance Department should immediately investigate all claims for arrears of Government salaries or pensions with a view to their settlement.

The object of the last paragraph was evidently to secure the adhesion of the vast numbers of pension holders, whose pensions had been suppressed by the Medjliss. There is, of course, no money to meet the immense claims which the Treasury would have to satisfy.

Except on the 9th July when a tea house, the property of one of the "bastis" in the Legation from which it is alleged a bomb was thrown on the 23rd, was wrecked by the Cossacks, no measure of vengeance has been taken, though a considerable number of arrests have been made, and I believe that a very active search for arms has been in progress.

It is very difficult to ascertain how the prisoners at Bagh-i-Shah have been treated. Some twenty-two were placed in chains, and of these one at least has died, it is said from the effects of a wound on the head, which had been untended since his arrest. I have more than once urged M. de Hartwig that the rumours of brutal ill-treatment would justify our making joint representations in the name of humanity, and he promised to make inquiries as to the condition of the prisoners. M. Baranowsky was accordingly sent to Bagh-i-Shah on the 13th, and M. de Hartwig has assured me that he could discover nothing in the treatment of the prisoners which would warrant our interference. Of the chained prisoners six or seven have been released, and there now remain only twelve who are to be shortly brought to trial.

On the 13th instant two arrests were made in the vicinity of Gulabek. There seems to be some reason to suppose that these arrests were bogus and effected

merely to produce the impression that even in Gulahek suspects are not beyond the Shah's reach.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 259.

Memorandum given to Major Stokes by a Journalist as Colonel Liakhoff's own account of the Events of Tuesday, June 23, 1908.

COLONEL LIAKHOFF took possession of the Mesjid-i-Sipah Salar before sunrise on the 23rd June with 300 Cossacks and two guns. He posted his men inside, at the north and west doors and on the roof, and returned to Bagh-i-Shah to report to the Shah. He returned to the Mesjid to find it occupied by Anjumans, who had turned his Cossacks out. It seems that soon after Colonel Liakhoff had gone 2,000 men, headed by Seyyid Abdullah, one of the two leading priests of Tehran, arrived and entered the inclosure in which the Assembly building and Mesjid stand. They proceeded to the north door of the Mesjid and demanded admittance. The Cossacks said they were very sorry, but their orders were to admit no one, Seyyid Abdullah said, "No, no, my friends, you misunderstand the matter. I have come for the sake of peace, and to prevent bloodshed. We are all brothers, all Mussulmans," &c., and the Cossacks let him in, and after him trooped in the 2,000 men, who then got all the Cossacks out of the Mesjid, shut the door and nailed it. Seyyid Abdullah then said, "If any son of a burnt father tries to get in, hit him."

On Colonel Liakhoff demanding from the Persian officer he had left in command what had happened, the latter replied, "We have lost the Mesjid—how it happened does not matter—but we have lost it." Colonel Liakhoff then posted detachments of Cossacks to close the approaches to the Assembly and Mesjid, i.e., at the points shown as "Cossacks" on sketch. His two guns he posted at A and B (see sketch*) and four more guns he got from Bagh-i-Shah and posted at C (to shell the Azerbaijan Anjuman), D (to fire south-east at Mesjid) and E. The location of the fourth gun is believed to have been the north-west corner of the Maidan. He then returned to Bagh-i-Shah to report, and advised the Shah to wait for the Anjumans to surrender, as he thought they could not get out of their position. While he was at Bagh-i-Shah, a Cossack orderly brought news to him that a bomb had been thrown from the Assembly inclosure wall, which had killed three Cossacks and two horses. It is stated that about the same time five or six Cossacks, moving past the Zil-es-Sultan's house towards the Maidan, were fired on from the Azerbaijan Anjuman. They did not return the fire, but said they had no orders to fire on the people, so would not. They joined the Cossacks in the Maidan. It is also said that at this time shots were fired from the Anjuman-i-Muzafferieh, on the north side of the Maidan, which killed some Cossacks.

Colonel Liakhoff returned to the Maidan and found his Cossacks taking cover under the walls of the houses round the Maidan. He ordered a volley to be fired in the air. This was answered by rifle shots from every side. The Cossacks now became beyond his control, and he ordered the guns to open fire. A bomb thrown from the Azerbaijan Anjuman killed a gun-team and four of the gun detachment, and the gun remained for one hour near the Anjuman building, but no effort was made to seize it. As a cross fire was brought to bear on it from the Anjuman and the Zil-es-Sultan's house, the gunners could not rescue it. The Mesjid was now shelled from the north by gun D, and from the south by gun A. More guns were sent for, and one was placed at F, south-west of Zil-es-Sultan's house. The gun at C was now rescued—a Cossack managing to creep up to it and attach a long rope to it. The gun was hauled to B, and then used to shell the Anjuman-i-Hidayat, then placed at K, and used to fire at Zil-es-Sultan's house. Another gun from the north-west corner of the Maidan fired only two shells. The first cleared the wall of the Medjliss enclosure of its defenders, who retreated to the Mesjid. The Cossacks then rushed through the gate into the enclosure. The gun-detachment of the gun at A had by this time all been killed except one ganner, with whom was a Russian officer. The Cossacks (mounted) who were guarding the approach to A from the south, suddenly found a crowd led by Mullahs advancing on them from the south. They ordered the crowd back, but the latter pressed on, whereupon the Cossacks retired north of the guns. The solitary ganner asked the Russian what he should do, and, being ordered to fire, he fired and killed a lot of men; the remainder retired. Shrapnel was fired into the Mesjid.

* Not printed.

CASUALTIES.

	Officers.	Men.
Cossacks—		
Killed	5	18
Wounded	6	38
	(one a Russian)	
Other regiments: killed and wounded .. .. .	..	120

Of the people, the official report to the Shah said 500 killed, but Colonial Liakhoff thought between 270 and 300 was more correct.

June 30, 1908.

Inclosure 2 in No. 259.

Rough Sketch of Neighbourhood of Assembly and Mosque, Tehran.

[Not printed.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 259.

Memorandum by Mr. Churchill.

IN accordance with your instructions, I went to town this afternoon, and when M. Baronowsky, my Russian colleague, joined me at 6 p.m. as arranged by you, we drove together to the Bagh-i-Shah accompanied only by the escort of two Indian sowars and two gholams I had taken with me from Gulahek.

I showed him the written instructions with which you had furnished me as to the general sense of the communication to be made by us to the Shah, and which, he said, exactly tallied with those he had received from the Russian Minister. I asked him to read a rough translation I had made on my way down, which he could commit to memory as he would have to act as spokesman. This he agreed to do, and when we were received by the Shah he repeated the message from memory with considerable accuracy. The Shah, who seemed to me to have been prepared beforehand, said in reply, "As to the first point, you may assure the Minister and Chargé d'Affaires that I am doing all I can to maintain order, and they can be perfectly reassured as to the safety of their subjects." Pointing to Colonel Liakhoff, who stood by his side, with a native Cossack officer as interpreter, His Majesty added that the task of maintaining order was intrusted to the Colonel, and was at that moment making arrangements with him for this purpose. As to the second point, His Majesty desired us to convey his assurances that he had had no quarrel with the Assembly, and that the steps he had taken were directed against the revolutionary Anjumans and the disturbers of the peace in general. His Majesty intended, he said, to observe the Constitution which he had himself given to his people.

I then referred to the special desire of the Indo-European Telegraph Department and the Imperial Bank of Persia for extra guards. His Majesty promised that these would be sent. As we retired Amir Behadur Jang, who had been present at the audience, said he would himself send the necessary guards, and, calling up an Aide-de-camp, asked me to tell him my wants. The officer in question promised to send the specified number of men the same evening, and this was punctually carried out.

The Shah had received us in the open air at the door of a small garden outside the actual Bagh-i-Shah. This garden had been found more convenient for the Royal harem, the Bagh-i-Shah itself being used for the Court officials and subsequently as the prison in which the numerous political prisoners were detained.

We returned, however, as we had come, through the Bagh-i-Shah, and there met the Mujtehd Seyyid Mohammed and his son, who were walking about apparently unrestrained. The venerable old Seyyid, whom I have known for some years, came up to me and seemed to wish to say something, but seeing M. Baronowsky in his Russian every-day uniform, he drew back, and after a formal salutation strolled away to another

part of the garden. I was, however, much struck by the excessive pallor of his face, and I only afterwards heard of the barbarous treatment he had been subjected to earlier in the day.

As we were about to enter our carriage I caught sight, quite close to us in the crowded camp in which were assembled Colonel Liakhoff's Cossacks and Amir Behadur's irregulars, who had taken part in the events of the morning, of a tent round which Cossacks were shouting and where apparently something quite unusual was going on. A camp-follower, in reply to an inquiry, said that the prisoners were there chained up, so M. Baronowsky and I approached, and I saw vaguely some thirty men with heavy chains round their necks all huddled in a very small tent with hardly any clothes on and some in a shockingly mutilated condition. One of their number rose from the middle of the confused mass and beckoned to me. I immediately recognized him as the "Sergeant-at-Arms" of the National Assembly, an inoffensive individual whom I had often seen at the Assembly, and who, in 1906, had acted in the capacity of Chief Constable when His Majesty's Legation was the asylum for some 14,000 "bastis." Afraid of recognizing other persons whom I might happen to know among the prisoners, I promptly withdrew, and as we drove away I saw the Cossacks dancing round the miserable prisoners cursing and, I fear, lashing them.

I left M. Baronowsky at Colonel Liakhoff's house and returned to Gulahek.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

Gulahek, June 23, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 259.

Martial Law Proclamation of June 22, 1908.

(Published June 26/27, 1908.)

(Translation.)

AS from the 22nd June, 1908, Tehran and the other towns of the Kingdom will be under martial law, therefore, for the suppression of mischief, the establishment of order, and the public tranquillity, we hereby do order and command that all gatherings in the streets, quarters, squares, as well as mass meetings in the neighbourhood of the town, as well as gatherings in private houses, are only lawful when the permission of the Governor has been obtained. And we hereby proclaim and command that all gatherings held contrary to this Regulation, in the streets, quarters, mosques, &c., will be dispersed by military force, and in the event of any disobedience and resistance, they will be dispersed by brute force and rifle-fire. In order to spare our people these painful incidents, we command them to avoid collecting even as spectators in the streets, mosques, &c. In case of disobedience to these Regulations—

Firstly, the leaders of these gatherings, and other persons concerned in the gatherings, will be arrested by order of the Governor and condemned to three months' imprisonment.

Secondly, the Commander of the Cossack Brigade, Colonel Liakhoff, has been appointed Governor of the town. The Chief of Police, all Military Commanders, are at his orders and under his command.

Thirdly, those gatherings in public meeting-places and other spots for personal or commercial affairs, guild consultations, gatherings in coffee-houses which are lawful, are absolutely forbidden later than three hours after sunset.

Fourthly, carrying of arms without the permission of the Governor is forbidden, and those guilty of this offence will be punished according to the first provision of this Proclamation. Even those persons who have permission to carry arms must have a ticket from the Governor.

Fifthly, persons showing disrespect to the military will be punished as indicated above, and also the soldiers will be allowed to draw their arms on them.

Sixthly, the fixing of punishment for offences committed in the provinces against the above provisions lies with the local responsible authorities.

Seventhly, the execution of these orders dates from the day of their issue.

(Signed) MOHAMMED ALI SHAH.

Inclosure 5 in No. 259.

General Amnesty Proclamation, dated June 25, 1908.

(Published June 27, 1908.)

(Translation.)

His Excellency the Prime Minister,

OUR object was the restoration of order in the Kingdom, and the steps taken to arrest the traitors and evil doers were for the relief and happiness of the people, and in order that the guiltless and peaceful citizens should cease to be disturbed and in trouble, and we are graciously pleased to proclaim by the present rescript a General Amnesty. We positively declare that we pardon all persons under suspicion. As to those who have been arrested, there will be a meeting of inquiry composed of unprejudiced persons who will carefully make investigations, and any one who is guiltless will be liberated on condition that the people do not transgress the limitations of the laws drawn up and promulgated by the military Government, or commit actions contrary to rule.

(Signed) MOHAMMED ALI SHAH KAJAR.

25th Jemadi-ul-Awwal, 1326.

Inclosure 6 in No. 259.

Colonel Liakhoff's Proclamation.

(Published about June 29, 1908.)

(Translation.)

BY command of His Imperial Majesty, for the peace of the people, and for the execution of the laws and regulations of the town, as well as for the information of the public, the following subjects are enumerated:—

1. The maintenance of general order in the town is especially entrusted to the Cossack Brigade of His Imperial Majesty, to the gendarmerie, and to the Khalaj and Zand regiments, and also to the police.

2. All persons who violate these regulations will be severely reprimanded and threatened; those persons who are oppressed are allowed to make their complaints to my office or to myself.

3. Any man having committed an injustice towards anyone will be punished in the presence of the petitioner and with the knowledge of a Representative of the Government. In case of any molestation or robbery, the injured party may bring the matter to the notice of the Cossack in charge of the guard-house. (Through a misprint the original stated that "the oppressed one will be punished.")

4. The price of bread and meat will remain as they are. Should prices be increased fines will be imposed.

5. Should there be an assemblage of more than five persons in the streets they will be dispersed by force of arms.

6. People engaged in selling arms or ammunition are not allowed to do so in the future without my permission; and permission is only to be given by me.

7. If any one fires in the town, Cossacks will be sent to the spot. If the firing has been done by mistake, the offender will be imprisoned for a certain period. If any one fires at night on thieves in houses, the Cossacks must enter the house to ascertain the facts. If the firing has been done purposely the offender will be severely reprimanded.

8. In any streets in which street patrols should be fired on from a house it will be destroyed by guns. (The remainder of the sentence is quite incomprehensible.)

9. Those people who put loads of straw or wood, or beams, &c., in the streets and prevent people from passing, are asked not to do so.

10. Carriages must stop on the right hand side of the roads behind each other in files; and drivers who do not observe these rules will be severely reprimanded.

11. Sprinkling of water and cleaning the streets are duties of the house owners and tenants.

12. I request the assistance of all the inhabitants of Tehran to help me in keeping order in the town.

Chief and Commander of His Imperial
Majesty's Cossack Brigade,
(Signed) Colonel LIAKHOFF.

[Undated.]

Inclosure 7 in No. 259.

Proclamation issued by the Prime Minister, July 6/7, 1908.

(Translation.)

NOTICE is hereby given to all the inhabitants of the town of Tehran that so long as the capital is under military conditions, the Cossack Brigade, the regiment in the guard-houses, and the gendarmes who are occupied in patrolling the streets and keeping order in the town, are under the command of Colonel Liakhoff, and they must be occupied in maintaining order and security in the town in accordance with his orders and instructions.

But the other affairs of the Governorship, the investigation of the complaints of the people, and doing justice to the claims of the petitioners, concern his Highness Mowayed-ed-Dowleh, the Governor of Tehran, and the inhabitants of the town must act in accordance, and recognize that the security and order of the town particularly concern the Colonel, whereas the investigation of the complaints of petitioners and others pertains to his Highness above-mentioned.

(Signed) THE PRIME MINISTER.

[Undated]

[26822]

No. 260.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 177. Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 15, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 152 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to report that at about 7 o'clock on the evening of the 23rd ultimo I learnt by a note from Major Stokes that, although there had been no sign of any intention on the part of the Popular party to take bast at His Majesty's Legation, he thought it by no means improbable that some attempt would be made during the course of the night. Knowing that every precaution was to be taken by the Cossacks by patrolling the streets and other police measures, it appeared that anything in the nature of *bast en masse* was practically out of the question, and I thought it unnecessary to send any special orders to Major Stokes, as he was perfectly aware of the nature of the general instructions of the Legation in this matter, namely, that *bast en masse* was not to be tolerated under any conditions whatever, but that asylum could not be refused to persons who were in real and imminent danger of their lives.

Towards 9 o'clock Major Stokes received a message from Taki Zadeh, the famous Tabreez Deputy, whose fearless and, at all events so far as public utterances are concerned, moderate advocacy of the constitutional movement, have made him an object of mortal hatred to the Shah, that he and two or three friends desired to take refuge in the Legation as they were being hunted down by the Cossacks and momentarily expected to be captured, and unless received they would inevitably be put to death. Major Stokes replied in accordance with instructions, and very shortly afterwards Taki Zadeh and six other, including the editor of the "*Habl-ul-Matin*" and the sub-editors of the "*Musavat*" and the "*Sur-i-Israfil*" presented themselves at the main gate of the Legation and were admitted. There is not the smallest question—indeed, the Russian Minister has himself admitted it to me—that had they been refused at least three, and very probably more, of the party would have shared the fate of Jehangir Khan and Malek-el-Mutakellimin, who were strangled without trial very early the following morning.

Later the same night, or rather very early on Wednesday morning, Morteza Kuli Khan, an Ispahan Deputy, and seven other persons were admitted in much the same circumstances, except that they sent no previous warning. I am not prepared to say that they would have been put to death, but there can be no question but that one and

all would have been brutally ill-used, as were, at all events for a time, a number of the prisoners at Bagh-i-Shah, among whom were some four or five Deputies. Some of them too, were undoubtedly perfectly innocent of all offence. Although the night passed quietly, except for numerous arrests, the town on Wednesday morning, the 24th, was in a state of panic; reports of wholesale arrests and shooting accompanied by the most circumstantial evidence were current, and if credit had been given to one-tenth of them there would have been ample justification for giving shelter to every applicant who presented himself at our gates. The evil reputation which the Shah brought from Tabreez and the well-known ruthlessness of his chief Persian Adviser, Amir Behadur Jang, were in the main responsible for the prevailing terror, and it is not likely that with the knowledge which the Persians have of the scenes enacted in Baku and the Caucasus two years ago, much comfort was derived from the fact that Colonel Liakhoff and M. Chapchal were known to be exercising great influence at Court. At any rate, that morning no Persian could have been persuaded that any one once carried off to Bagh-i-Shah would leave the Shah's camp alive. Proof of the terror that reigned is given by the fact that Mumtaz-ed-Dowleh, the President of the Medjliss, and two others, after two days spent in hiding in the Jewish quarter south of the bazaar, at last took refuge at the French Legation close to Zerguendeh disguised in the dirty rags of Dervishes. Amin-uz-Zerb, the wealthy merchant and banker, also intended to avail himself of M. Lecomte's hospitality, but hearing that no guarantee for his property would be asked for, preferred, when after a few days the panic had begun to subside, to make direct terms with the Shah. He was to have come disguised as a Franciscan Father.

In the circumstances it is not surprising that a considerable number of people should have sought refuge at the Legation, and it says much for Major Stokes' firmness that no more than forty or thereabouts actually gained admittance. At the moment there was, I am convinced, no idea whatever of taking *bast en masse* for political motives; there was only blind terror, and the desire of each man was to get somewhere out of reach of the Shah; and it is more than probable that had no guards been placed about the Legation, the great majority of the *bastis* would have been induced to return quietly to their own homes within a day or two.

On the 26th the Proclamation of martial law containing the proviso that in case of disrespect to the military, soldiers were empowered to use their arms, appeared and only increased the general terror. As instances of the alarm it inspired I may mention that Meftah-es-Sultaneh, the head of the English section of the Foreign Office, who, like every one else had been a member of an Anjuman, did not leave his house for two days; and Hussein Kuli Khan, Nawab, brother of Abbas Kuli Khan of His Majesty's Legation, having reached his house in Gulahak, has not yet (15th July) ventured to return to Tehran. Applications for admittance to the Legation were received in ever-increasing numbers, but, in spite of the fact that practically every one leaving the Legation was being arrested, Major Stokes refused asylum to all except those whose account of themselves convinced him that they would be sent off to an unknown fate at Bagh-i-Shah.

One or two persons succeeded in entering the Legation compound unknown to Major Stokes, probably through the side gate at which the water-carriers who fetch drinking water for the British colony from the Legation "*kanat*" habitually enter. At my orders even this door was eventually closed, in spite of the considerable inconvenience caused thereby.

Only two other persons managed to gain entrance by closely following a cart bringing in building material for the Military Attaché's house, in course of construction. This was on the 9th instant, but the men did not pretend to be in any way concerned in political questions, but merely *bastis* of the ordinary kind who hoped to use the Legation to obtain redress for a private grievance. They were quite possibly spies sent by the Shah.

It is very difficult to gauge the probabilities of an attempt to take *bast* in large numbers in His Majesty's Legation. For the first day or two, as I have said, there was, so far as I can judge, no idea whatever of doing so for political purposes, and for some days afterwards; moreover, I am disposed to believe that the uncompromising refusals which any suggestions of the kind have encountered during the crisis of last December have been quite enough to convince the leaders of the Nationalists that such a move would be useless, although later there was no doubt a despairing hope among the masses that the Legation would receive them as in 1906. On the other hand, of course fear might have driven numbers to seek asylum with us, and once admitted to the Legation

the bastis would unquestionably have desired to use their position to exact political terms from the Shah.

I make no doubt that the Shah has been much impressed with the danger from his point of view of this contingency and that he has been encouraged in it by his advisers. But I am no less convinced that whatever probability has existed, it has been considerably enhanced by the persistency with which reports have been spread by the Court party that His Majesty's Legation desired to bring about a *bast en masse*.

In Gulahek there are some fifteen persons who may be said to have come for safety from arrest. Two of them are brothers inhabiting their own house, and of course no exception can be taken to their presence. The others have either rented small houses or are staying with their friends. So far as I can judge, out of the whole number there is only one who has any real cause for uneasiness. From this person, a Judge of the Court which condemned to imprisonment the leaders of the Shah's hooligans in the December crisis, I received an urgent appeal to include his name among the list of those who had taken bast in the Tehran Legation, but in the circumstances I decided that I could not properly do so. He is not, from his own account, so much in danger from the Shah as at the hands of the men whom he tried and who have been allowed by the Shah to return to Tehran from exile at Kelat. I am in hopes that my efforts to discourage the timorous from coming to Gulahek will be successful; but I have been, and still am, constantly asked what measure of protection I can give to temporary residents in the village, and it is not impossible that a few more may arrive.

There is not much to be said as to the attitude of the other Legations. The United States' Minister, acting on instructions from Washington, has point-blank refused to admit refugees in any circumstances whatever. The Italian Legation received Sani-ed-Dowleh, the Minister of Finance, and his family, who—unless from the Popular party, whom he is said to have deceived—was never in any danger whatever, and from a conversation I had with Baron Romano I believe he would have admitted practically any one. So far as I am aware, the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires has not been troubled with any applications. For various reasons these three Representatives had not moved into the country and were therefore on a different footing from those whose official residences in town were in the nature of things practically closed. The German, Belgian, and Austrian Legations have kept their doors closed, and the German Minister has been loudly proclaiming the correctness of his attitude in turning away all bastis, as compared with my own. It is safe to say that, but for the antics of Baron Richthofen last winter, Count Quadt would never have had any applications to refuse. It was, moreover, perfectly easy for him to keep the gates of his Legation closed, as there was no one in residence there except a couple of Cossacks in charge of the building; whereas in His Majesty's Legation Mr. McIntyre, the representative of the Office of Works, is temporarily occupying one of the houses, and there was also a new building in course of erection.

The other two Legations are in much the same case, while the Russian Legation is scarcely the place where asylum would be sought against the "Russian" Cossack Brigade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[26823]

No. 261.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 178.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 15, 1908.

ONE of the chief points of friction between His Majesty's and the Russian Legation during the late crisis has unquestionably been due to M. de Hartwig's belief that the members of my Staff have been encouraging the agitation against the Shah.

As I informed you by my telegram No. 164 of the 28th June, M. de Hartwig formulated five charges against them, viz.: (1) that Mr. Churchill had invited persons to take bast at the Legation; (2) that Major Stokes, as an Indian officer, had sympathies which induced him to act in a manner inconsistent with our *entente* with Russia; (3) that Abbas Kuli Khan was a member of an Anjumen, and had delivered violent speeches there; (4) that the Legation gholams were inviting the people of the bazaars

to take bast in the Legation; and (5) that some of the gholams were members of Anjumens.

I told the Russian Minister that, as regards the first four, I was convinced that the allegations he had heard were totally untrue, and that as for the last I could of course not be absolutely certain that none of my gholams had joined Anjumens; it was not impossible that they had; practically everyone in Tehran did belong to some kind of Anjumen, and in any case investigation into such a matter seemed to me to be rather useless, as there was nothing but native evidence to go on. The charges against the diplomatic staff, however, were serious, and I should be glad if he could give me an instance which I could examine. M. de Hartwig replied that Mr. Churchill had written to a Deputy living in Zerguendeh, inviting him to take refuge in the Legation. I replied: "Now at last we have a real fact to go on; can you not produce the letter?" M. de Hartwig then said it was not in a letter but by a conversation or a message that the invitation had been given. I said that I knew the Deputy in question, Abul Hassan Khan, and, from a recent conversation I had had with him, had judged him to be rather inclined to reactionary proclivities, and therefore it seemed, on the face of it, absurd that Mr. Churchill should suggest his taking refuge with us. M. de Hartwig was, however, not to be convinced, though he might have remembered that any one living in the Russian village of Zerguendeh was as safe from arbitrary arrest as himself. On returning to the Legation I questioned Mr. Churchill, who said he thought he could explain the story. Briefly, the facts are as follows: On the 24th June Mr. Churchill sent a note to Abul Hassan Khan, whom he has known for many years, informing him that Taki Zadeh and some newspaper editors had taken refuge the previous night in the Legation in town, and saying that he would like to see him if he were able to come to Gulahek in the course of the day. He had called to see me the previous day. The note arrived while Mr. Basil, the Armenian correspondent of the "Daily Mail," who is known to be in Russian pay, was with Abul Hassan Khan, who casually mentioned its contents, and Mr. Basil at once repeated it, no doubt with embellishments, to M. de Hartwig.

I have seen letters from both Abul Hassan Khan and Mr. Basil, absolutely confirming this account, and the former is willing to tell M. de Hartwig that Mr. Churchill has never, in any way whatever, given him any invitation or encouragement to take bast in His Majesty's Legation. On two occasions I have wished to explain the matter to M. de Hartwig; on the first he flatly denied that he had ever mentioned a letter, and on the second he declined to listen, and brought up an accusation against Major Stokes. I examined this also with great care, and found that it had just about as much truth—distorted truth—as that against Mr. Churchill. The story is long and complicated, and I think I need not trouble you with its details.

As regards Abbas Kuli Khan, he is not, and never has been, a member of any political Anjumen whatever. In February he attended one single "rozakhani"—a purely religious meeting, though held in the lodge of the Azerbaijan Anjumen—and, after asking my permission, on one occasion accepted an invitation to a meeting of a scientific club (Anjumen) out of pure curiosity.

I have ascertained that three of our gholams have been members of Anjumens, all of a moderate type, but I cannot learn that they ever took any active part, or in fact did more than pay their subscriptions and attend a few meetings; the fault, if fault there is, is a venial one, considering that there are other Legations whose official Munshis were prominent officials of Anjumens of advanced views.

As regards the fourth charge, I have had indirect inquiries made in the bazaars, the result of which convinces me that had the smallest encouragement been given by our gholams we should have had 5,000 bastis in the Legation. One of my informants, who may be implicitly trusted, says: "The bazaars were waiting for Mr. Marling to give the signal" (i.e., on Monday, the 6th July). The fact that no such movement was made seems to me to be sufficient proof of the loyalty of our gholams under peculiarly trying circumstances.

As I reported in my telegram No. 198 of the 6th July, M. de Hartwig promised to give me some definite charge against these men, to be supplied from Colonel Liakhoff's reports. He has hitherto failed to do so.

I have sometimes been tempted to accept the French Minister's view that M. de Hartwig knows all his accusations to be false, but I am convinced that this is not so. There are plenty of people who have an interest in creating mistrust between the two Legations, and no doubt innumerable stories to our discredit reach him. M. de Hartwig probably reflects that there is no smoke without fire, but feels that he has not and cannot bring any proof that will bear examination. He has no doubt reported his

suspicious in a very positive shape to his Government, and would feel very embarrassed if he now had to retract them.

He has no doubt also received a severe disapproval for having given events here a turn which has betrayed the fact that Russia, or at least some of the Russian Agents here, have ignored the understanding between Great Britain and Russia that both Powers will abstain from interference in Persian internal affairs, and he is proportionately anxious to be able to excuse himself by alleging that the loyalty of His Majesty's Legation is not above suspicion in this respect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[26824]

No. 262.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 179.)

Sir,

Gulahék, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Wratislaw, reporting on the recent raids by Kurdish hands in the neighbourhood of Urumia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 262.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 10. Confidential.)

Sir,

Urumia, June 21, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegrams Nos. 36 to 40 concerning the recent Kurdish raids on villages in this district, I have the honour to report that these attacks appear to have been the result of two distinct expeditions.

The first was the continuation of the Sheitanabad affair and was the work of Kurds from Ushnu, aided by a party of Herkais from Mergavar, who laid waste the country nearly as far north as the Baranduz River, committing many murders and carrying away large numbers of cattle and other loot. I have not held a separate inquiry on my own account into these occurrences, but they are a matter of common knowledge, and the Mussulman witnesses examined in my presence by Muhfeshem-es-Sultaneh gave what appeared to be a fairly reliable account of what happened to them, though their evidence showed signs of previous coaching on some points. It is difficult to say exactly at what time this raid ceased, and it is probable that while the majority of the Kurds who participated in it returned home with their plunder, a certain number of them remained in the district in the hope of obtaining more, and after indulging in minor robberies finally took part in the second and shorter raid. I cannot otherwise explain the undoubted presence in the latter of Mamash Kurds.

The second raid began on the evening of the 10th June, when a large body of Kurds, the exact number of whom it is impossible to discover, but which probably amounted to several hundreds, suddenly poured into the Christian village of Babarud on the right bank of the Baranduz River. They at once collected the cattle of the village and drove them off. The main body remained all night in Babarud and the adjacent Christian villages of Serdarud (marked on Major Maunsell's map) and Dadarud, plundering and in some cases burning the houses. The Russian, Catholic, and Armenian churches in Babarud were broken open and everything of value was taken and much damage done. The inhabitants hid in the vineyards round the villages, where a number of women from Babarud and Serdarud were raped during the night, but no one was killed. At daybreak next morning a strong guard was left to keep the bridge over the river and the main body went on to attack Ardishai, a large Christian village about 3 miles to the north. Here a disagreeable surprise awaited them, for a day or two previously the inhabitants of the adjoining village of Tekke had hired a score of well-armed Christian refugees from Tergavar to defend them and these men, on the alarm being given, hastened to the assistance of the villagers of Ardishai. They were soon driven back by superior numbers into Tekke, but later on when some of the Kurds had left with the cattle and others were

entangled in the village and plundering the houses the Christians again fell upon them and inflicted severe loss. The Kurds finally retired, leaving ten men dead in Ardishai and carrying away other dead and wounded. On the Christian side one man was killed and a woman severely wounded.

While returning through Babarud the Kurds, incensed at this check, fired wantonly at all the men they saw in the vineyards, of whom they killed three.

I have gathered the above facts from the depositions of the inhabitants of the various villages concerned and the Tergavar refugees; none of those whom I examined had previous interviews with the Persian authorities. They were unanimous in declaring that the Kurdish force which attacked them was mainly composed of Herkais from Mergavar with a lesser number of Mamash Kurds—the latter easily recognized from their very distinctive dress. Only two men were personally recognized: one Osman Beg, a Kurd from Ushnu, who has been hanging round the Baranduz Valley for some months, and the other a certain Seyid Hussein, whom the villagers state has been employed as the deputy of the Herkai Chief, Kerim Khan, in collecting "dakhalets," or offers of submission to the Sultan. Osman Beg is at present living at Balanich on the right bank of the Baranduz River, opposite Dizerteke, where the late Mehmet Beg's family have resided since they left Tergavar. I think it highly probable that the latter also shared in the raid.

On the 14th a small party of Kurds, composed of Herkai and Mehmet Beg's men, came to the village of Behene, a mile and a-half west of Urumia, and carried off a herd of cattle belonging to the town which were grazing there, including two cows of the Russian Mission. A party of townspeople and Government horsemen went out and performed prodigies of valour from a distance, but did not succeed in saving the cattle, which were driven off in the direction of the Upper Baranduz.

On the 16th some forty Begzadeh Kurds, part Tamar Beg's men and part direct from Tergavar (supposed to be Bedr Khan's men) raided right down to the lake as far as Ghurmakhane, the port of Urumia, and carried off from 600 to 800 sheep which were grazing on the hills near. They also plundered the village and wounded one man. Inam Kuli Mirza's launch was in port at the time, and the captain, a German, with nine armed passengers, exchanged shots with the Kurds, and succeeded in keeping them off the merchandize accumulated on the shore. Most of the sheep were taken into Tergavar, Tamar Beg only getting fifty as his share. No outrages have been reported since this date.

On the 11th Mr. Miller, the Acting Russian Vice-Consul, and I called on Taher Pasha and represented to him the responsibility incurred by him and his Government for the acts of Kurds coming from districts occupied by the Turkish troops, and invited him to take steps to prevent any further outrages and punish the guilty. He told us he had already given the necessary orders to Yaver Pasha, who commands on this part of the frontier, and to the Kaïmakam of Ushnu, but he would not admit that any Kurds, for whom the Turkish Government were responsible, had come into Persian territory, and he generally showed himself quite indifferent.

On the 13th Taher called on me, and I informed him of the Babarud and Ardishai occurrences. He assured me that he did not believe a word of it, and treated the matter with very unbecoming levity. I remarked, in reply, that if I were a Turkish official I should be ashamed of myself instead of laughing, when I heard of innocent people being robbed and murdered. He then said that his long experience had taught him to believe nothing that he had not investigated himself on the spot, so I invited him to visit Babarud and Ardishai with Mr. Miller and me next day and see for himself. After his previous declaration he could hardly decline this proposal, and we accordingly all rode out together on the 14th. We found the road to Urumia crowded with refugees from Tekke, Ardishai, and other villages, bringing what portable property remained to them into the town. The other side of Gheuktepe the country seemed almost entirely deserted. Not a head of cattle was to be seen in the pastures, and many of the villages were quite empty. Two or three families only remained in Serdarud, where the houses had been stripped bare by the Kurds, and many of them set on fire. In Babarud there were about thirty persons left, and these testified before us to the facts as stated above. The bloodstained garments of the murdered men were produced, and we offered to have their corpses disinterred if Taher considered it necessary. He declined the offer, however, and assured us that he was now convinced that men had been murdered, women raped, and the village plundered. We also visited the three churches, the doors of which had been smashed in, and their portable contents of any value carried off. The pictures in the Orthodox and Catholic churches were taken from their frames and torn to pieces.

We then went to Ardishai, and saw the bodies of two Kurds which still remained unburied. They had been stripped, and their clothes appropriated by the Tergavar men, and were in such a disgusting state as to afford no possible means of identification. Several dead horses, which had belonged to the assailants, also lay in the streets.

The inhabitants had by this time fled to Urumia, fearing a fresh attack. A few women and one man remained in Tekke, and the latter, who had shared in the defence, gave an account of it, which agreed with the details I have already reported.

Taher now gravely assured us that he was convinced that the raid was got up by the Persian authorities in order to discredit the Turks, and that the costumes of Turkish Kurds had probably been supplied to the marauders with this object.

Next day Taher called on me again, and said that he had proposals to make for restoring security in the district. These were—

1. That a Persian and Turkish soldier should be stationed in each village which had been deserted by its inhabitants in order to give confidence to the people.
2. That mixed posts of Turkish and Persian soldiers should be placed at certain strategic positions to be chosen by Muhteshem, so as to prevent the passage of bodies of Kurds; and
3. That a mixed body—say, of fifteen Persian Cossacks and fifteen Turkish cavalrymen under reliable officers of the two nationalities—should patrol the Baranduz district and rout out any Kurds who might be there.

It was, of course, understood, he added, that these measures would be purely provisional and without prejudice to the frontier question.

Mr. Miller had by this time joined us, and we told Taher that the measures he proposed seemed to us likely to be efficacious, but that their acceptance or refusal was entirely a matter for the Persian authorities. He thereupon begged us to submit them for him to Muhteshem, with whom his relations were so cold as to perhaps prejudice the chances of an agreement.

We accordingly visited Muhteshem, and explained what Taher proposed. He would not hear of the first point, but informed us that he agreed to the second and third, and would enter into communication with Taher on the subject. He subsequently changed his mind concerning the second point, preferring to send Persian troops alone to the more important strategical positions (if he can get them to go) while the execution of the third remains in abeyance pending the arrival of an absent officer whom it is proposed to put in command of the Persian portion of the mixed force.

Muhteshem has not shown any great amount of resource or energy in dealing with the situation outside, which is indeed one of peculiar difficulty. The troops at his disposal have all along shown a marked disinclination to proceed to any locality where there was a likelihood of their having to fight, while the Maku horsemen in particular have proved themselves entirely useless for offence or defence, though ready to plunder indiscriminately when occasion offered. Muhteshem has, however, succeeded in maintaining fair order in the town, which was at one moment threatened with serious disturbances from the Mussulman refugees and the more turbulent local element. The refugees have hitherto declined to return to their homes, though all danger for them now seems over for the moment. The population, both Mussulman and Christian, of the Urumia Plain is most unwarlike, and seems incapable of striking a blow in its own defence. The Ardishai affair shows how easily the Kurds, who are robbers rather than fighters, can be beaten off with a little pluck and energy, but unfortunately the unreasoning panic inspired by their mere name is such that the example of the Ardishai people is not likely to be generally followed.

To the north the situation has improved during the last week, but the telegraph line has been destroyed by the Somali Kurds for so great a distance that its thorough repair with the limited means available is likely to be a long affair. This systematic destruction of the telegraph is not an ordinary Kurdish trick, and they have probably been put up to it by others.

Taher Pasha acknowledges that Yaver Pasha entered Somali and Charik with Turkish troops ten days ago, but he has not yet openly declared that these two districts are annexed to Turkey though claiming them as belonging to her. He rather gives us to understand that Yaver Pasha's mission was a philanthropic one, undertaken with the object of calming the Kurds and dissuading them from further attacks. It is highly improbable that the Turks once there will be withdrawn.

I inclose copies of the letters addressed to me by the English, French, and American Missions, as reported in my telegram No. 36.

Since writing the above I have received another call from Taher Pasha, who came to tell me of the measures taken by Yaver Pasha to keep the Kurds in order. He says that some thirty of them have been, or are about to be, arrested in Tergavar and Mergavar, and on the whole he seems to have tardily awakened to a sense of his responsibilities. He now avows, by implication, that Turkish Kurds were after all implicated in the recent occurrences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 262.

Rev. W. A. Shedd to Consul-General Wratislaw.

Dear Mr. Wratislaw,

Urumia, June 11, 1908.

IN addressing you on behalf of the American Mission in Urumia it is not necessary to remind you that for some time past the state of the country has been growing more and more perilous, and the danger to life and property has become more imminent day by day. The situation at present is alarming in the extreme. Within the past few days some three or four Christian villages and a much larger number of Moslem villages have been sacked in the southern part of the plain of Urumia, the assailants being the same Kurds who recently attacked and devastated the district of Dole. To-day they attacked the villages of Ardishai and Takya, some 12 miles from the city. Although the Kurds were beaten off with the loss of twelve of their number, they have since renewed the attack. There seems to be great reason to fear that in the village of Babarud, although it had previously been pillaged, the Kurds to-day killed a considerable number of innocent people. The village of Dizzataka is threatened by another large force of Kurds. In another part of the plain and by an entirely different set of Kurds an attack was made on the village of Anhar, only 4 miles from the city. Another alarming feature of the situation is that a large number of desperate refugees are pouring into the city from the pillaged villages. To-day we have barely escaped a serious mob and no one can tell what a day may bring forth. We all hoped that the coming of the Turkish Commissioners would be marked by a cessation of the attack by Kurds, practically all of whom are from districts now occupied by Turkish troops. When we called on the Turkish Commissioners recently the condition of the country was discussed, but the subject was treated by them in a very flippant way. There is no force on the part of the Persians capable of resisting the Kurds, and the only hope would seem to be the action of some other Power. While the greatest peril is undoubtedly that to the poor villagers, both Christian and Moslem, we cannot but feel that there is increasing danger to foreigners here. It is of course impossible for us to carry on our usual work in the villages. Under all these circumstances we cannot but appeal to you to exert every effort to bring about such action as will rescue the poor people of this region from pillage and murder and also protect foreign residents from the common danger.

I have, &c.
(On behalf of the American Presbyterian Mission),
(Signed) W. A. SHEDD.

Inclosure 3 in No. 262.

Rev. W. A. Wigram to Consul-General Wratislaw.

Dear Mr. Wratislaw,

The English Mission, Urumia, June 13, 1908.

I WRITE to call your attention to certain facts concerning the present condition of the plain of Urumia.

It is of course known to you that the Kurdish raids have reached such a pitch of boldness of late that it has been impossible for Europeans to go beyond the immediate environs of the city of Urumia except under strong escort. So long as we observe these precautions, we are, of course, in no personal danger; still the state of semi-siege is at least very unpleasant and a most serious hindrance to our work in the country.

[1500]

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The inhabitants of the villages in the plain, Mussulman and Christian alike, are in a different case. Many villages have been plundered and many villagers murdered. Many more villages, from fear of plunder, have been abandoned, and their inhabitants have taken refuge either in Urumia or in other defensible centres. Agriculture is at a standstill, at a time when this compulsory idleness will entail famine at a later date.

We recognize that the Governor of Urumia, though well-intentioned enough, is absolutely without the power to stop these disorders. As, however, the raiding Kurds are either admittedly Turkish subjects or are claimed as such by the Turks, and as the Turks have abundant force on the frontier to control every Kurd in the country, could not pressure be brought on the Ottoman authorities, either in Urumia or elsewhere, to bring about the cessation of the present state of anarchy?

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WIGRAM.

Inclosure 4 in No. 262.

French Archbishop Lesné to Consul-General Wratishaw.

*Congrégation de la Mission dite des Lazaristes,
Ourmiah, le 11 Juin, 1908.*

M. le Consul,

VOUS le savez, le pays d'Ourmiah est depuis longtemps ravagé et saccagé par les bandes des Kurdes semant partout, par leurs meurtres et leurs pillages, la terreur et l'épouvante. La situation devient de jour en jour de plus en plus grave; aujourd'hui elle est extrême.

Profondément émus par tant de malheurs, nous nous sommes réunis aujourd'hui avec les membres des autres missions étrangères d'Ourmiah et avons décidé tous ensemble d'avoir recours à votre haute influence pour vous prier, M. le Consul, de vouloir bien avoir l'obligeance de rechercher les auteurs et les auteurs de ces désordres, d'en établir la responsabilité, et aussi de chercher les moyens d'y mettre fin au plus tôt.

Dans l'espérance, &c.

(Signé) H. LESNÉ,

*Délégué Apostolique de la Perse.**

[26825]

No. 263.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 180.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 15, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 93 of the 23rd April last, I have the honour to report that on the 2nd May a note was addressed to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that, before receiving the communication prompted by my representations from his Excellency's Department, the Minister of the Interior had already taken measures for the repairs of the Ahwaz-Borasjun telegraph line, and that the line would be put in order.

I thereupon requested the Acting Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department to ascertain what steps had been taken by the Persian authorities to effect the necessary repairs, and on the 11th May I was informed that, according to a report from a British signaller at Borasjun, the only portion of the line in bad order was that between Borasjun and Kolal, about 8 miles distant from the former; that the repairing of this section was being wilfully delayed for the purpose of extorting money from the Khan of Borasjun, that gentleman having already been blackmailed to the extent of 300 tomans and refusing to pay more.

On the 12th instant Mr. King Wood communicated to me a further report stating that at the beginning of June the Borasjun-Kolal section was repaired at the expense of the Khan of Borasjun, that the section from Shuster to Kolal was repaired during the spring. The signaller at Borasjun is of opinion that at present the line seems to be in good condition, that defects will not be apparent until the rains begin, and that repairs more thorough than the Persian authorities are likely to undertake, or their local officials to carry out, will undoubtedly become necessary.

These reports must, I venture to think, be regarded as indicating a colourable fulfilment of their promises by the Persian Government, and as strengthening the

opinion recorded in my above-mentioned despatch that until next winter no reasonable opportunity will present itself for reopening the question. I am, however, keeping a careful record of each occasion on which there is a breakdown on the line.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[26826]

No. 264.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 181.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia.

The lengthy telegrams which I have been obliged to send on recent events in Tehran have made it unnecessary for me to give a more detailed account than that which is included in it, but I have attempted in separate despatches to deal at greater length with those aspects of the crisis which appear to me to deserve special notice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 264.

No. 7.—*Monthly Summary.*

Tehran.

THE following is a chronological account of the events which have occurred in Tehran from the 17th June to the 15th July, which are reported upon in detail in separate despatches:—

June 17–21.—Negotiations continued between the Assembly and Anjumans on the one side and the Court on the other.

June 22.—The Shah sent the Ministers to the Assembly to make demands for the surrender of certain persons accused of creating disorders. Assembly severely attacked the Ministers for alleged complicity with the Shah, and asked them to resign. The Shah's demands were refused.

June 23.—Mosque and Assembly surrounded by Cossacks. Shortly after 6 A.M. hostilities broke out. During the course of the morning the following places were shelled and then looted by the Cossacks and other soldiers: (1) Sepahsalar Mosque, (2) Assembly, (3) Banou Ozma's house, (4) Zil-es-Sultan's house, (5) Anjuman Azerbaijan, (6) Anjuman Muzafferi, (7) Anjuman Hedayet. Casualties during the day, according to Colonel Liakhoff: Cossacks, 23 killed, 44 wounded; other regiments, killed and wounded, 120. On the Popular side it is stated that from 270 to 300 casualties occurred.

Most of the Popular leaders were captured during the course of the day. Taki Zadeh and about seven others took refuge in His Majesty's Legation.

At 6.30 P.M. the British and Russian Dragomans waited on the Shah and expressed the hope of the British and Russian Representatives that order would be maintained and the Constitution observed.

June 24.—Refugees at His Majesty's Legation increased to about forty persons, including several Deputies.

Malek-el-Mutakellimin and Jehangir Khan were strangled at Bagh-i-Shah early in the morning. Zahir-ed-Dowleh's house was bombarded and looted during the day. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires called on the Foreign Minister and discussed the situation. At 7 P.M. a strong Cossack guard was placed round the Legation to prevent access by refugees. The Munshi of the Austrian Legation had an audience of the Shah. Mr. Litten, Dragoman of the German Legation, called on Amir Behadur at Bagh-i-Shah. Both urged the maintenance of order.

June 25.—Legation continued to be guarded by Cossacks. Abbas Kuli Khan and the British courier with Foreign Office bags were interfered with. Mr. Churchill is sent to town to urge withdrawal of Cossacks on Foreign Minister. He and Mr. Gye go

together and subsequently call on Colonel Liakhoff. Cossacks are removed the same night.

June 26.—Proclamation appears appointing Colonel Liakhoff Governor of Tehran and proclaiming martial law. Arrests continue. Foreign Minister calls on Mr. Marling.

June 27.—Guards appear round Legation in another form, i.e., so-called "gendarmes" in plain clothes. Mr. Churchill is sent to remonstrate with Foreign Minister, who sends his son to see Colonel Liakhoff. Proclamation announcing a general amnesty is published.

June 28.—Legation is more closely guarded than ever. Cossacks reappear. At 5 P.M. Major Stokes telephoned: "Legation is, in plain English, besieged." Mr. Churchill is sent to see the Shah, and has an audience in the presence of the Foreign Minister. Shah is stubborn, and says that if he removes the guards 5,000 people will rush to the Legation.

June 29.—Guards removed in the evening.

July 1.—Mr. Churchill is sent to the Shah with a translation of the King's telegram in reply to the Shah's complaints.

July 3.—The demands of His Majesty's Government for reparation for indignities offered to the Legation are presented to the Shah and Persian Government.

July 4.—Legation is "completely invested" all night and until 10 A.M. on account of rumours that the people contemplate closing the bazaars and taking *bast en masse* at the Legation.

July 5.—Guards finally removed.

Events of which dates are doubtful:—

1. Death of a Judge who had delivered sentence on the murderers of Fercidoun, the Parsee merchant. He was under chains at Bagh-i-Shah and died of a festering wound in the head.

2. Return from exile at Kelat-i-Naderi of the Shah's roughs.

3. Appointment of Amir Bahadur Jung as "Sepahsalar," or Commander-in-chief.

4. Appointment of reactionary Governors to nearly all the provinces: Assef-ed-Dowleh to Fars; Nayer-ed-Dowleh to Khorassan; Ain-ed-Dowleh to Azerbaijan; Seif-ed-Dowleh to Arakistan; Ekbal-ed-Dowleh to Ispahan, &c.

5. Appointment of Kavam-ed-Dowleh as Finance Minister.

6. Granting of the demands of the Dutch Minister as to Saad-ed-Dowleh in refuge at the Dutch Legation since December 1907.

LIST OF PROCLAMATIONS ISSUED.

	Approximate Date of Publication.
1. Explanations as to reasons of <i>coup d'Etat</i>	June 23
2. Colonel Liakhoff appointed Governor and martial law proclaimed ..	" 26
3. General amnesty	" 27
4. General Liakhoff's Proclamation in the capacity of Governor	" 29
5. Dissolution of Assembly and new elections*	July 2
6. Grand Vizier's announcement that Moayed-ed-Dowleh is Civil Governor	" 6
7. Moayed-ed-Dowleh explains Colonel Liakhoff's Proclamation (No. 4) ..	" 7
8. Shah's Proclamation as to reforms	" 8

* Proclamation No. 5 is dated June 24, but has not to this day been posted or circulated among the public. Copies are difficult to obtain.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,
Oriental Secretary.

Tabreez.

Recent events here are dealt with in a separate despatch.

Resht.

1. On the 19th June some Cossacks fired on an orator addressing a meeting. They were disarmed, maltreated, and thrown into prison. The bazaars were closed the next day. On receipt of news from Tehran that the Shah had made three prominent Nationalists prisoners, the Anjumans compelled the Governor, the Karguzar, and the Director of Telegraphs to hand over to them their official seals. On the 26th June news arrived of the Shah's *coup d'Etat*. All approaches to the Governor's house were guarded and three guns were brought out. On the 27th the Governor ordered the opening of the bazaars, but the order was not obeyed. Some Cossacks were sent to enforce compliance, and a fight ensued in which three persons were killed and fourteen wounded. On the 29th the bazaars were opened and quiet was restored.

2. A Russian gun-boat, the "Geok Tepe," attempted to cross the bar at Enzeli on the 25th June but ran aground. She was got off and returned to Baku, the "Krasno-rodsk," a gun-boat of shallower draught, replacing her. The Russian Consul is thought to have asked for a gun-boat at Enzeli, being afraid that the people might seize the 12,000 rifles and the ammunition which is lying in the custom-house consigned to the Persian Government.

Barfurush.

The town was thrown into disorder at the news of events at Tehran. The people showed themselves much opposed to the Shah, and asked a British merchant if he would grant them refuge in the event of reprisals by the Shah. He replied that he would not. The son of a Member of the National Assembly committed suicide on hearing a report of his father's death at the hands of the Shah. His funeral was made the occasion of a great demonstration against the Shah.

Meshed.

The Shah's success seems to have been accepted absolutely, special prayers being said in all the mosques in thanksgiving for it. M. de Giers informed Major Sykes that M. de Hartwig had told him the Shah's quarrel was not with the Assembly but with the Zil-us-Sultan's party. He added that the Russian Military Attaché for Seistan, Baron von der Flaas, was due shortly at Meshed, and that but for financial weakness Russian troops would now be in Tabreez.

Turbat-i-Hayderi.

1. Four Russian Cossacks and two Persian sowars arrived on the 16th June from Seistan. The Cossacks were returning to Russia, but the sowars were to guide an officer who was to come to Seistan with more Cossacks, presumably Colonel von der Flaas.

2. Captain Iyass, on the 16th June, informed Captain Keyes that Amir Bahadur Jung, the Shah's Adviser, had ordered Rustam Beg, his Agent at Salami, to place his tenants at Captain Iyass' disposal in the event of disturbances at Turbat. Amir Bahadur had also ordered thirty sowars to be sent to Tehran.

Ispahan.

On the 15th June telegrams were sent from Ispahan to all parts of Persia, urging the deposition of the Shah and the appointment of the Zil-us-Sultan as Regent. These seem to have been sent in reply to requests for co-operation received from Resht, Tabreez, Shiraz, and Hamadan. Some attempt was made to organize a march on Tehran from all towns to depose the Shah. The bazaars and public offices were closed, and daily meetings were held to discuss the situation. On the 20th June there was talk of the Constitutionalists in each town taking refuge in the British Consulate, while the National Assembly was to take refuge in the British Legation. It was generally believed that Russia was encouraging and helping the Shah financially, and fears were expressed that Russia would even send troops to his aid if necessary. The Shah sent a telegram, in which he threatened to use the sword to retain his throne. Ispahan replied

by a message to the people of Tehran that the Shah was an infidel. On the 23rd June news of the events of that day at Tehran arrived. The Shah telegraphed to the Governor that he had had to use force against certain disturbers of the peace, that Tehran had been placed under martial law, and that if troops were required to keep order in Ispahan they would be sent. From the 24th to the 26th June meetings were held to discuss the situation, but without other result than that a telegram was sent to the chief priests at Kerbela asking for support. The town has since remained quiet. On the 3rd July the Ala-ul-Mulk, Governor-General, was recalled to Tehran. He left on the 7th, and is succeeded by Ikbāl-ud-Dowleh.

Yezd.

On the 10th July news was received that the leaders of the recent agitation here had been arrested.

Seistan.

1. Major Kennion arrived at Birjand on the 30th May, and was accorded a very good reception, all the officials being present to receive him.

2. M. Bravine recently told Mr. Dankes that the Russian Consul who is to replace him shortly would be a Colonel, *i.e.*, a military officer specially appointed to Seistan on the analogy of Captain Iyass to Turbat.

3. Shaukat-ul-Mulk, who recently obtained a loan of 2,000*l.* from the Imperial Bank of Persia, seems to have already offered a bribe to some official at Court to get him kept on in his Governorship.

Shiraz.

1. The Zil-us-Sultan, Governor-General of Fars, left on the 6th July for Ispahan, travelling by the Sarhad route. His departure was due to the appointment in his place of Asaf-ud-Dowleh. During his short tenure of office the Zil-us-Sultan displayed considerable energy in restoring order and in trying to recover goods stolen from British firms and subjects.

2. Motamid-ud-Diwan, a prominent enemy of the Qawami faction, was early in June released, and appointed Secretary to Akbar Mirza, son of Zil-us-Sultan, to whom the command of the Arab tribesmen was intrusted. An Arab Chief, Asghar Khan, having refused to come into Shiraz, Motamid-ud-Diwan, with a force of 600 infantry, 200 horsemen, and two guns, was sent to discuss matters with him at Seidan. On his arrival Asghar Khan greeted him in the most friendly way, took him aside, and, pulling out a pistol, shot him dead. His men then killed Motamid-ud-Diwan's younger brother. No one moved a finger to help either of them. The event is likely to have a very bad effect on the peace of Fars.

3. His Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf arrived on the 20th June and called on the Governor-General the next day.

4. Sahib-i-Ikhtiar, formerly Governor-General of Fars, left for Tehran on the 3rd June.

5. The two sons of the late Qawam embarked at Bushire early in June on the Bombay mail steamer on their way to Europe.

6. Shiraz has remained quiet since the news of the Shah's success at Tehran was received.

Kerman.

At the beginning of June a follower of the Naib was tried and sentenced to imprisonment. The Naib and his followers released him by force, insulted the Court which had tried him, and pursued the prosecutor into the house of the Nazim, roughly handling both of them. The Nazim took refuge with the Governor, who seemed to have been a disinterested spectator of the struggle between the Naib and the Nazim. On the 16th June, however, the Nazim came out of refuge to organize a demonstration to demand the return of the Naib, who had been compelled to leave the town for Mahun by the party of Adil-us-Sultanch. Rafat-i-Nizam with 300 men moved from Bam on Mahun to support the Naib, but the Governor sent a regiment and some guns which met him near Mahun on the 6th July and repulsed him. The Naib then disappeared, but reappeared on the 11th June in a mosque at Bam; Rafat-i-Nizam was reported to have reached Farrah.

Kermanshah.

1. No authentic news of events at Tehran had reached the people of Kermanshah on the 30th June. The Chiefs of the local tribes had, however, offered the Shah the services of 10,000 tribesmen, and as the Chiefs were holding a Conference in the town it was unlikely that the Constitutionalists would make any move.

2. His Majesty's Consul mentions that the Russian Agent now residing at Burujird, Mirza Abdul Ali Khan, last year made two attempts to get at what he thought were the Consulate cyphers. This occurred when Captain Haworth was out in camp with the Russian Consul.

PERSIAN GULF.

Bushire.

1. Mirza Abul Kasim, employed by the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas as a spy, arrived at Jask on the 25th May and returned to Bunder Abbas on the 3rd June. He intended to visit Karachi, the police of which place have been asked to watch him. During May he visited Gwaddur, Gwetter, Muscat, and Jask.

2. The news of the Shah's *coup d'Etat* was received peacefully, and the local Assembly and Anjumans quietly dissolved by order of the Governor.

3. The "Muzafferi" published two libellous articles against the British Government recently. The matter was referred to the Governor, who promised to take action.

4. The Resident left for Shiraz on the 8th June for the summer.

Bunder Abbas.

Lieutenant Gabriel, His Majesty's Consul, proceeded on three and a-half months' leave on the 18th May.

Ahwaz.

1. Captain Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul, left on his summer tour on the 6th May. He reached Ispahan early in June.

2. An Emissary from the Russian Consulate at Kermanshah was reported to have been recently collecting commercial and political information in Burujird and Khurramabad.

3. Herr Mygind, of the "Berliner Tageblatt," arrived from Ispahan on the 16th May. He intended to go to Shuster and Dizful and to travel through Luristan to Kermanshah, but eventually left by steamer for Bagdad *en route* to Tehran via Hamadan. The only visit he received in Ahwaz was one from M. Ter Meulen.

Lingah.

Mr. Brown, the local representative of the German firm, Wönekhaus and Co., gave out in May that Herr Wönekhaus would shortly return to the Gulf from Germany in a man-of-war. He also attends meetings of the Anjuman-i-Azad, and appears to have thoroughly identified himself with the Sunni party in local politics.

Mohammerah.

1. Herr Mygind, of the "Berliner Tageblatt," arrived from Bunder Naseri on the 27th May. He camped outside the town and flew a flag on his tent. He left for Bagdad on the 31st May.

2. Messrs. Lynch's refusal to pay for two bales lost while in charge of shipper's agents has led to a boycott of their steamers by Shuster merchants. The Moin-ut-Tujjar's agent is suspected of being at the bottom of this.

3. News from Maidan-i-Munastun is that second drilling has practically found oil, but drilling has been suspended until preparations can be made to avoid loss of oil.

(Signed)

C. B. STOKES, Major,

Military Attaché.

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No. 265.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 182. Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 15, 1908.

FROM the language which M. Isvolsky has held to Mr. O'Beirne, no less than from what M. de Hartwig has said to me, I think it is not unreasonable to infer that the Russian Minister here has been representing to his Government that Zil-es-Sultan has received from His Majesty's Legation a certain measure of countenance in his undoubted complicity in the recent agitation against the Shah, and I think that in the circumstances it will be of interest that I should briefly recount what has been the nature of my relations with His Imperial Highness during the past few months.

There is no doubt that the warning which he received from the Russian Minister and myself during the crisis of December last had a very sobering effect on the Zil, and he was, I think, very much impressed with the fact that the two Legations were acting together in the matter. Our warning to him was not, I think, stronger than the circumstances warranted, but judging from the instructions contained in your telegram No. 210 of the 26th December, 1907, that you wished that at all events good personal relations should be maintained with His Imperial Highness, I allowed Mr. Churchill on three or four occasions to go to his palace, by invitation, on matters of a formal business nature, such as witnessing of signatures, &c., but when the pretext for the visit was obviously frivolous I withheld my consent. On two occasions the Zil paid me visits at my own house, one shortly after the attempt on the Shah's life in February, and there was some bantering conversation on political subjects; but I am convinced that the Zil had no reason to think that his ambitions would receive any encouragement from the Legation.

His nomination to the governorship of Fars came as a surprise. I was, of course, aware that it was in contemplation. I neither urged nor discouraged the appointment, and, in fact, I did not know that it had been made until after he had started for his post.

From the moment of his arrival at Shiraz, the Zil began to importune me with inquiries as to the course of events in Tehran. At that time His Imperial Highness' position as Governor was by no means secure, and he himself seemed by no means unwilling to relinquish it. His presence in Fars, however, seemed so desirable for the maintenance of order in that distracted province, that I occasionally sent him very brief replies, always carefully worded, so as to discourage him from thinking of resignation. I was also careful to inform Mr. Acting Consul Bill, through whom the correspondence passed, of the exact nature of the relations between the Zil and His Majesty's Government, and that, being aware of the Zil's ambitions, I desired to deter him from any attempt to forward them. Later on, his inquiries showed that what he wanted was accurate and disinterested information as to the prospects of the constitutional struggle, and I at once warned him that he could expect no countenance from His Majesty's Government in his designs, and as evidences of his complicity in the agitations against the Shah accumulated I reminded him of the conditions on which he enjoyed the friendship and protection of His Majesty's Government. My warnings have been repeated several times in the past month, and the Zil's later messages left no doubt that he was perfectly well aware of our attitude towards him.

I have from time to time told the Russian Minister of the general nature of my relations with the Zil, and I have always told him frankly that I should view his departure from Fars with the greatest regret.

As to the part the Zil has played, telegrams which he has addressed to Isfahan have come into my possession which can leave no doubt that up to the 23rd ultimo he was actively supporting the popular cause against the Shah; but the victory of the Shah on that day brought about a complete change, and he began to send angry messages to his sons and supporters at Isfahan, abusing them roundly for having compromised him without his authority.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

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No. 266.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 183.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 15, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum by Major Stokes describing in detail the manner in which His Majesty's Legation was kept under military surveillance from the evening of the 24th June to the 30th. Major Stokes' account only records what he actually saw himself, but as a matter of fact on two days, the 28th and 29th, the watch was even more close than he was aware of, for on those two days there were four, not two, posts of Cossacks stationed each some 250 to 300 yards from, and in sight of, the Legation compound, and so disposed that each on its round must pass along one or more of the roads bounding the Legation compound. These dispositions are proved by a letter from Colonel Liakhoff of which I have a copy furnished me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. M. de Hartwig has assured me that one of these pickets, that at the north-west corner, was intended to prevent the great garden of the late Atabeg from being used to store plunder. I of course replied that had I known this I should have raised no objection to that particular picket; but as a matter of fact the pretext for placing twelve mounted men there was patently hollow, for three or four foot Cossacks would have been amply sufficient to prevent any one from trying to conceal loot in it.

The Memorandum, I think, shows quite clearly that from the evening of the 24th to some time during the night of the 25th the Legation was very closely watched by Cossacks in uniform, that on the 26th the watch was very much relaxed, but only to be renewed again on the following day, but by gendarmes instead of Cossacks, and that on the 28th four pickets of mounted Cossacks were stationed in such a manner as to patrol the roads all round the Legation at frequent intervals. On the 29th the patrolling was less obtrusively done, and on the next day the Cossacks disappeared, though a few police were still hanging about.

For the next three days there was little to complain of, but on the night of the 3rd July a strong picket of some twenty Cossacks was posted on the road north of the Legation, and on the 4th and 5th patrols were constantly working round the Legation. The reason put forward for renewing the guards, as reported in my telegram No. 189 of the 4th July, was the exaggerated story that preparations were being made at the Legation for the reception of a large number of bastis.

Attempts have been made by the Russian Minister, in defence, of course, of Colonel Liakhoff's action, and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on instructions from the Shah, to persuade me that the reports which I have had from Tehran as to these proceedings were exaggerated. The answer is that in no other part of the town, not even in the vicinity of the Medjliss and Mosque, have any measures been taken in any way resembling those in force around His Majesty's Legation, and that the state of affairs has been the common talk of the town, and the Legation the centre of attraction for curious sightseers.

No doubt the Shah has been nervously anxious to prevent the recurrence of bast in large numbers at the Legation as in 1906, and no doubt also his apprehensions have been quickened by the reports brought him by Colonel Liakhoff of our alleged endeavours to induce the bazaar people to seek asylum with us. My own impression is that Colonel Liakhoff's first measures on the evening of the 24th were taken without reflecting that he was offering a serious affront to a foreign Legation, and that later on he persisted in them to prove to the public that the Legation was powerless to help them. I cannot, however, acquit Colonel Liakhoff of having acted with wilful disregard for the respect due to His Majesty's Legation, and I fear also that he felt some degree of satisfaction in so doing. The tone he used towards Mr. Gye and Mr. Churchill when they called to endeavour to persuade him to withdraw his Cossacks on the 25th June was distinctly arrogant, not to say hostile, and, both these gentlemen assure me, betrayed considerable personal animus. He himself gave to M. de Hartwig a very distorted version of the interview, in which he represented Mr. Churchill as demanding redress for imaginary slights offered to himself by the Cossacks at the Legation, whereas Mr. Churchill did no more than give an instance of the somewhat insolent demeanour—cases of which I have myself noticed—of the Cossacks towards members of the Legation, but specially disclaiming any desire for the punishment of the offenders. I inclose a short Memorandum by Mr. Gye of this interview. Colonel Liakhoff has also accepted more than one charge of misrepresentation against Major Stokes, charges

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based on nothing but native evidence, and has forwarded them on to the Russian Minister. These stories no doubt lost nothing in the telling when M. de Hartwig related them to me, but that it should be suggested that by merely speaking to a Cossack Major Stokes sought to undermine their discipline points to the existence of animus which was certainly not on our side, as the Russian Minister is constantly suggesting.

A further point is that it would have been perfectly simple to have prevented anything in the nature of a rush of refugees from the bazaar without placing a single Cossack within sight of the Legation, or in a manner to which we could not have taken exception. I pointed this out to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 26th ultimo, and he promised to try to induce the Shah to adopt less offensive measures, but his efforts seem to have achieved only the partial success of obtaining an altered disposition of the Cossacks on the 28th and 29th June.

The Russian Minister has more than once assured me that the posting of guards about the Legation has been done at the express command of the Shah himself and independently of Colonel Liakhoff, but the balance of evidence shows that this was not the case, and, moreover, I have been assured by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that Colonel Liakhoff was solely responsible, and that the Shah has throughout been guided entirely by his advice. I believe that Ala-es-Sultaneh's word may be implicitly relied on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 266.

Memorandum by Major Stokes respecting the Guards round His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, June 24 to June 30, 1908.

June 24.—At about 7 p.m. some sixteen mounted Persian Cossacks under a Persian officer came and took up a position directly in front of the main gate of the Legation and within 10 yards of it. They were posted in single rank at intervals of about 3 yards. It happened that sixteen Persian soldiers, who had a few minutes before been turned out of the Legation for having been implicated in the looting on the previous day, were standing near the gate about to move off. These men the Persian officer also took command of and posted them in front of the gate and within 2 or 3 yards of it. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Smart, who were just then starting for Gulabek, remonstrated with the officer, who, in reply, remarked that the Shah had the right to punish evil-doers. He, however, moved his Cossacks—still in the same formation—to a distance of about 20 yards from the Legation gate. The detachment of soldiers moved away from in front of the gate, but lined up along the wall of the Legation immediately north of the gate. Mr. Churchill, on arrival at Gulabek, reported the above facts to Mr. Marling. Later other posts of Cossacks and gendarmes were established on the other three sides of the Legation in such a way as to prevent free access to it. No person was allowed to leave the Legation or to approach it without being molested. Mr. Hawkins, of the Imperial Bank of Persia, who was temporarily occupying the house of the *Chargé d'Affaires* in the Legation, had his carriage stopped when approaching the gate. Persians who came to the Legation on the most innocent business were at once seized and taken off by Cossacks when they left it. The following incident occurred at the gate of the Legation: An acquaintance of our gholams—the son of a merchant at Constantinople at whose house our gholams used to put up when they conveyed despatches there—came to the Legation gate, spoke to a gholam, and then walked away. Before he had gone 10 yards he was seized by the head policeman of this quarter and hustled into a carriage to be taken off as a prisoner, the policeman remarking: "So you meant to go into the British Legation, did you?" The man tried to escape by getting out of the carriage, and a struggle ensued, whereupon a passing Cossack at once fired at him. He wounded him, but also wounded the policeman, who died two days later of his wounds. The merchant's son was taken off to prison, but was subsequently released in compliance with the demands of His Majesty's Government. Legation servants who left the Legation were also molested by Cossacks, and were only allowed to pass when gholams went to their rescue. Three of these servants, who were seated drinking tea at a tea-house opposite the gate, were suddenly threatened by Cossacks with rifles, whereupon they fled into the Legation.

June 25.—The above state of things continued during this day. When Mr. Gye

and Mr. Churchill arrived at 1 p.m. to interview the Minister for Foreign Affairs there were eight Cossacks within sight of the main gate of the Legation—four at the gate itself, within 2 yards of the walls, three at the guard-house opposite, and one who walked up the front of the Legation as they passed and stared rudely at them. There was also a detachment of soldiers—about twenty men—a short distance from the south-east corner of the Legation. During the afternoon Abbas Kuli Khan arrived from Gulabek. Several Cossacks at once rushed at his carriage, pointing their rifles at him. In the same way, when the carriage conveying the Foreign Office bag in charge of a gholam and a sowar—both in uniform—was near the main gate Cossacks rushed at it and thrust their rifles into the carriage. The Cossacks were withdrawn after dark.

June 26.—At 10 a.m. there were no guards round the Legation, but one Cossack was posted in the guard-house opposite the main gate. This man reported on all persons who entered or left the Legation. No objection could be taken to this man's presence, as I found, on inquiry, that a Cossack had been posted in each guard-house in the town. At 7 p.m. a carriage driving towards the Legation was stopped by a policeman, but allowed to pass when he was satisfied the occupant was not a refugee.

June 27.—In the morning the head of the police of this quarter of the town came to the Cossack on duty at the guard-house, and obtained from him details of what he had seen of people entering and leaving the Legation. A short time afterwards two gendarmes were posted at the north-east corner of the Legation. I then walked right round the Legation and found other posts, five men at the south-east corner, six men at the south-west, four men on the north side. I spoke to the two latter parties. They were not in uniform and stated that they were waiting for a carriage to take them to Niavéran, to which place they said the Shah was moving. Mr. Churchill arrived from Gulabek at 1 p.m. and found five gendarmes within 3 yards of the main gate, who told him they were on duty there. Mr. Churchill went on, but on his return a few minutes later he found two of them had gone to the guard-house, while the others had gone to the south-east corner of the Legation. He again spoke to them and said he would seize them if they loitered near the gate. A few minutes later they sent in a message by a gholam asking to be pardoned, and adding that they were only obeying orders, that they were forty in number, and were sent by the Chief of Police, who acted on the orders of Colonel Liakhoff. Mr. Churchill then went to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose son came himself during the afternoon and interrogated the gendarmes as to who had posted them round the Legation. At 7.15 p.m. these men were still about, though not so conspicuous as earlier in the day.

June 28.—At 9 a.m. I walked round the Legation and found the following guards:—

1. A patrol of twelve Cossacks under a Persian officer at the south-east corner.
2. A similar patrol of Cossacks at the north-west corner, but some 200 yards down the road.

The procedure of these patrols was to move along two sides of the rectangular perimeter of the Legation, then halt at one corner for half an hour or so, in observation, and then repeat the process, so that the three sides of the Legation on which there are gates were all continuously under their observation. I spoke to one of the Persian officers, who told me his orders, which were from Colonel Liakhoff, were to patrol round the Legation.

There were also posts of gendarmes of three to five men each at the south-east, south-west, and north-west corners. In addition to this, on two occasions at least men were seen to have climbed trees in order to ascertain, presumably, what prominent men were among the refugees.

June 29.—Early in the morning there were eight armed gendarmes patrolling the roads round the Legation in pairs. By 10 a.m. their numbers had increased, and six Cossacks were posted at the south-east corner of the Legation. In the evening the mounted Cossacks were replaced by dismounted men, posted in pairs at the corners.

June 30.—There were four or five gendarmes round the Legation. The Cossacks had disappeared, but the gendarmes reported any one they saw have communication with the Legation to the Cossacks on guard at the north gate of the Turkish Legation. This is only a few yards from the south-east corner of the British Legation, but is not visible from it. A gholam, observing a gendarme beckon to a carpenter, who was employed in the Legation, watched both men. A short while afterwards the gendarme conducted the carpenter to the Chief of Police, who was round the corner near the Turkish Legation. The carpenter was being cross-examined as to the refugees in the

Legation, when the arrival of the gholam caused the three men to separate, and the carpenter was brought to me. He stated that the Chief of Police had asked him the names of the refugees. I took steps to prevent a recurrence of this incident.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major.

Inclosure 2 in No. 266.

Memorandum by Mr. Gye.

ON the 25th June I accompanied Mr. Churchill on his visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs with the object of obtaining the withdrawal of the Cossack guards round His Majesty's Legation. His Highness being at Bagh-i-Shah, we were received by his son, who at once proceeded to Bagh-i-Shah, and in the course of the afternoon returned with his father bearing a message from the Shah to the effect that he had no knowledge of the arrangements made, but that orders had been issued to remove such guards as were objected to.

As at 6.30 P.M. no measures had been taken even to reduce the number of Cossacks around the Legation, and being unwilling to leave town without effecting anything, we went to the Russian Colonel's house in the hope of obtaining an enforcement of the Shah's orders, and were received by him.

In reply to Mr. Churchill, who stated the object of our visit, Colonel Liakhoff, who at first seemed unwilling even to admit the presence of extra guards in the vicinity of the Legation, plainly stated that the Shah had intrusted him with all arrangements for the maintenance of order in the town, and that he had taken his own measures to insure this. Upon Mr. Churchill explaining that the Shah had given orders that the guards should be lessened in accordance with our wishes, Colonel Liakhoff reiterated his instructions and took no pains to disguise the fact that orders issued from Bagh-i-Shah carried little weight with him. He added that the Shah had appointed him Governor of the town, and the Proclamation announcing his appointment would be published in a day or two.

(It is a significant fact that this Proclamation, which was issued on the following day, was dated the 22nd June.)

Beyond giving vague assurances that His Majesty's Legation would have no cause for complaint in the future, Colonel Liakhoff neither expressed regret for what had taken place nor, indeed, appeared to believe that there had been the slightest grounds for the exception taken to the Cossack guards.

Throughout the interview Colonel Liakhoff's manner betrayed considerable irritation, and though maintaining a semblance of politeness, he appeared unable to conceal his prejudiced opinion of the validity of our complaint, or, indeed, to hide the hostility of his general attitude towards His Majesty's Legation.

(Signed) E. GYE.

[26831]

No. 267.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 186. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahak, July 16, 1908.

TO give a just appreciation of the causes which have led to the recent strained relations between the British and Russian Legations in Persia, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of their respective attitudes as regards Persian internal affairs for the past six months. The policy of the Russian Minister in December will still be fresh in your memory, and I need do no more than recall that in response to my invitation to take joint action, with the object of bringing about a reconciliation between the Shah and the Constitutional party, M. de Hartwig consistently refused to take any such action until the course of events proved to him that the Shah was really in danger of losing his throne, if not indeed his life. For some little time subsequent to the December crisis I believe that M. de Hartwig conscientiously used his influence with the Shah to persuade His Majesty to act up to his repeated promises to respect the Constitution, but at the same time there cannot be the least doubt that his sympathies were wholly with the reactionary party, and that he was determined to do everything in his power to maintain Mohammed Ali Shah on the throne, nor has he made any secret of it, as

witness his contention that the two Governments, by their recognition of successive Valiads, are under the obligation to maintain the present Shah. Only the other day he blandly recalled to me that our Governments were under an Agreement to do so, and when I said that in conversation with Sir Arthur Nicolson M. Isvolsky had declared that it was a matter of perfect indifference to Russia who occupied the throne of Persia, he expressed his incredulity in a manner that was scarcely polite (see Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 267 of the 25th December, 1907); in fact, M. de Hartwig's observance of the understanding that the guiding principle of the action of the two Powers in Persia was to be strict non-interference in internal affairs has been in the most marked contrast with the rigid adherence to it of His Majesty's Legation. M. de Hartwig has made a very adroit use of our understanding for common action; whenever the support of His Majesty's Legation could be used to further his policy he has never scrupled to ask for it, nominally in the interests of the peace of the country, and though I have managed once or twice to stave off hints that our co-operation would be desirable, when I felt that the pretext was too flimsy, I have, as a rule, thought it better to comply rather than give M. de Hartwig the occasion for reporting to his Government that His Majesty's Legation was not acting up to the spirit of the Agreement of August 1907. Indeed, if I have anything to reproach myself with it is that I have been too complaisant in this matter.

Having thus succeeded in dragging us into a seeming acquiescence in his policy (an appearance which was the more easily produced by our absolute and consistent refusal to countenance or show sympathy with the Nationalist party), M. de Hartwig believed that after the *coup d'Etat* carried out by Colonel Liakhoff on the 23rd June nothing would stand in the way of the Shah in crushing the agitation against him. He, however, left out of his calculation the fact that in certain circumstances it would be impossible for His Majesty's Legation to refuse asylum to refugees. Those circumstances unfortunately arose, and M. de Hartwig saw at once that the Shah's triumph would not be so complete as he had wished. But instead of recognizing that this eventuality must always have been possible with the opinions held in England as to the right of asylum, M. de Hartwig has chosen to see in it a deliberate break, on the part of the Legation, from the policy of joint action. He would not recognize that while intervention has been thrust upon us he has deliberately espoused the Shah's cause; and that if one of the two parties to the recent Agreement has failed to observe the policy of non-interference agreed on, it is certainly not Great Britain. However, having taken up this attitude he had to justify it to his Government, and has consequently accepted as Gospel, and no doubt reported to St. Petersburg, every story tending to show that members of His Majesty's Legation had deliberately encouraged the agitation against the Shah, and were even inviting bastis to take refuge with us.

I listened with patience to all his allegations, and having examined such as were susceptible to proof, and found them quite unjustifiable, attempted to convince him of the fact. As a rule, he simply declined to listen or, on the single occasion when he did, denied having ever made the essential part of his accusation. He even went further. In speaking of the proclamation of martial law, I had pointed out the severity of Article 5, permitting soldiers to use their arms in case of disrespect shown to them; he assured me that on his advice the Shah had cancelled the paragraph, and that it had never appeared in the Proclamation as placarded in the town. Yet the Proclamation, with the objectionable paragraph, was at that moment and for days after affixed to the guard-house opposite the Legation main gate. I could easily give a dozen instances of the same kind in which the Russian Minister asserted a thing which was not.

In the circumstances, it appeared to me that where we could not even agree on ascertainable facts, to attempt to discuss any point whatever with M. de Hartwig was not only useless but might easily lead to a personal disagreement, which I felt must at all hazards be avoided. On one occasion, indeed, we were not far from it, when he said, *à propos* of the necessity of preserving the appearance of accord, "Enfin vous admettez que jamais je n'ai rien fait ici sans vous en avertir." I could only reply to this amazing statement that I could conscientiously give the same assurance.

M. de Hartwig appears also to have made it a grievance that I did not apply to him to obtain the removal of the Cossacks about the Legation. As a matter of fact, I informed him at once that I had protested against it, and again later that His Majesty's Government took a very serious view of the matter. He said that he would inquire of Colonel Liakhoff about it, but the result of his inquiries was merely that he assured me that I had been misinformed as to what had taken place.

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Except that he at one time half-hinted that he doubted my own good faith—an insinuation which he as promptly withdrew—M. de Hartwig's manner was friendly enough. His tone, it is true, was so insistent as almost to amount to hectoring, but his manner in speaking to his colleagues of my attitude was described to me by the French Minister as that of a superior talking of the "mutinerie d'un subordonné." He spoke openly of my having failed to observe the understanding for joint action, and denounced the action of the Legation in receiving bastis as deliberately hostile to his own policy. He would not, however, admit that the posting of Cossacks around the Legation by the advice of Colonel Liakhoff was a far more public sign of disaccord between the two Legations. All the time, moreover, every kind of calumny was being spread abroad about the Legation; the familiar ones about the ghoulans were most circulated; but new ones, such as that I had been recalled and Major Stokes and Mr. Churchill dismissed, were also current. Some of them, I regret to say, were traceable to Colonel Liakhoff, whose conduct M. de Hartwig was at such pains to defend.

It was of course most unfortunate that, owing to the breakdown of the telegraph wire between St. Petersburg and Tehran I was left for some days in ignorance of the result of the exchange of views between London and St. Petersburg. As State messages take precedence of all others, M. de Hartwig received his telegrams some time before I did, but though he knew that I had heard nothing from Mr. O'Beirne, he never gave me an inkling of what the views of his Government were. However, as soon as he called on me I felt sure that he must be holding out the olive branch, and I at once responded.

Since then our relations have been as friendly as is possible in the circumstances, but I regret to say that M. de Hartwig is still inclined to listen to any story to the discredit of our ghoulans, and this morning brought up a fantastic fabrication that the wife of one of them was the leading spirit of a women's Anjuman of a particularly obnoxious type. The truth is that the woman is unusually well educated for her station in life, and for the past three months has kept a school for girls, which is attended by the daughters of persons in a very respectable rank of life. Most of the pupils are under 14 years of age.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING

[26832]

No. 268

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 187.)
Sir,

Gulahak, July 17, 1908.

AS reported in my telegram No. 210 of the 11th instant, the formal apology in reparation for the insults recently offered to His Majesty's Legation was tendered to me by Ala-es-Sultaneh, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Persian Government, and by the Vezir Afkham, the Minister of the Court, on behalf of His Imperial Majesty the Shah, on Saturday, the 11th instant.

The ceremony, which was of the briefest description, took place in the drawing-room of the Legation in Tehran. The staff of His Majesty's Legation attended in uniform. The Ministers, who appeared in their official robes of honour, came together, and in turn read the apology, which was then translated by Mr. Churchill. At the same time the Minister of the Court handed to me the Shah's guarantee for the lives, property, and persons of the refugees.

In reply, I stated that I would not fail to communicate to His Majesty's Government this expression of regret on the part of the Persian Government, and that, in so far as this portion of His Majesty's Government's demands was concerned, the incident might be looked upon as at an end; but I added a warning that if any attempt were made by the Shah to escape from the engagements into which he had entered in regard to the security of the refugees and their property, the question would at once be reopened.

The Minister of the Court then said that the Shah had given him a verbal message for me, in which His Majesty reiterated his assurances of good faith in regard to this point.

I have the honour to transmit a copy of the note to the Persian Government communicating to them His Majesty's Government's demands, of their note accepting

them, and of the English text of the apology, together with a translation of the Shah's guarantee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 268.

Mr. Marling to Ala-es-Sultaneh.

Your Highness,

Gulahak, July 2, 1908.

I DID not fail to communicate to my Government the contents of the telegram under date of the 29th ultimo, in which, by the commands of His Imperial Majesty the Shah, your Highness expressed regrets at the affronts which during several days had been placed on His Britannic Majesty's Legation.

The instructions which I have to-day received from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs direct me to inform your Highness that, in view of the repeated insults to which His Majesty's Legation was exposed, in spite of my formal protests, at the hands of the police and Cossack Brigade, His Majesty's Government, having carefully considered the grave situation which has thus been created, have formulated the following demands:—

1. That the Cossacks and police be withdrawn from the approaches to the Legation, and that British subjects and servants be not molested by them.
2. That a formal and full apology be offered to myself at the British Legation in Tehran by the Minister of the Court on behalf of His Imperial Majesty the Shah, and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Persian Government, both these high officials being in full uniform, and due and sufficient notification of the intended visit being given beforehand.
3. That all persons who have been recently arrested while going to or coming from the Legation on ordinary business shall be immediately released.
4. That a written guarantee signed by His Majesty the Shah shall be given to me for the lives, persons, and property of the refugees now in the Legation.
5. That if among those refugees there are persons charged with crimes, as distinct from political offences, for which they are now amnestied, a fair trial shall be given to them, at which a member of His Britannic Majesty's Legation shall be present.

In presenting these demands to your Highness, I am instructed to state also that in the event of their not being immediately accepted and scrupulously fulfilled, His Britannic Majesty's Government will be compelled to take such steps as they may consider fit to obtain the reparation which they consider due to them.

In accordance with the instructions of my Government, I have laid the above terms before His Imperial Majesty the Shah.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 2 in No. 268.

Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.

(Translation.)
Sir,

Tehran, July 9, 1908.

COGNIZANCE has been taken of the contents of your note of the 2nd July, containing five conditions, which you stated that you proposed to the Persian Government in accordance with the instructions of your Government. The matter has been submitted to His Imperial Majesty the Shah, and in view of His Majesty's sacred resolve to give particular care to the protection and maintenance of the foundations of the friendship and concord existing between the two Governments, and in order to prove these pure intentions, His Imperial Majesty has agreed [to the demands], and has commanded me to inform you of the acceptance of the conditions contained in your note. Regarding the third point, you will, of course, inform the Persian Government who the persons are whose release is required in order that the necessary orders may be given. With regard to the fourth point, security for the lives, property, and persons of the refugees in the Legation will be given; but as I have stated verbally, and as the British Government is aware, I remind you of the necessity that some of

the refugees in the British Legation should travel for a time, since their presence is the cause of mischief, and their departure will conduce to the tranquillity of which the country is in so much need. The necessary orders have been issued for the execution of the above-mentioned conditions, and it is evident that you will consider this incident as completely closed. It is hoped that just as the Persian Government always endeavours as far as possible to meet the representations of the British Government, the latter will appreciate the goodwill shown by the Persian Government.

I avail, &c.
(Signed and sealed) ALA-ES-SULTANEH, MOHAMMED ALI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 268.

Text of Verbal Apology of Minister of Court and Minister for Foreign Affairs for Disrespect to His Majesty's Legation by surrounding it with Troops.

THE Imperial Government of Persia have learnt with great regret that, in the carrying out of measures which were designed only to maintain order and to assure the security of the inhabitants of the capital, certain subordinate officials, in carrying out their duty, have committed certain acts of disrespect towards the respected Legation of His Britannic Majesty, which was contrary to their instructions. Therefore His Imperial Majesty the Shah has been greatly displeased at the conduct of his officials, and has charged me to convey to your Excellency his sincere regrets at these incidents, which were in no way in conformity with [his] sentiments of friendship towards England.

Tehran, July 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 268.

Shah's Rescript guaranteeing Lives, Property, and Persons of Refugees in His Majesty's Legation.

(Translation.)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs,

AS some Persian subjects, being afraid on account of their past behaviour, have taken refuge in the British Legation, we, out of respect for that Legation, have forgiven them for their past offences, and by the means of this Rescript we declare that the persons mentioned in the list given by the British Legation should be secure on account of their lives, property, and persons, and that they may consider themselves amnestied for their past offences.

Some of them who are the cause of mischief, although their past offences have been forgiven, should necessarily leave the country for a time. You should submit to us the list, in order that we may fix the period of their absence.

(In the Shah's handwriting.) It is correct.

[26833]

No. 269.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 188.)

Sir,

Gulabek, July 17, 1908.

IN my despatch No. 161 of the 18th ultimo on the general situation in Persia at that date I ventured to hazard the remark that, to carry out his policy of maintaining Mohammed Ali Shah on the throne, M. de Hartwig here had traded, or rather gambled, on the conviction, general among Persians, that Russia was prepared to intervene by force of arms on behalf of her protégé. Events have so far justified his calculations; there can be no shadow of doubt that the Russian officers who carried out the *coup d'État* on the 23rd ultimo owed their immunity solely to the belief that their death would be revenged by a Russian invasion, or that had they been killed the fortunes of the day would almost certainly have gone quite differently, and the Shah would have been in refuge at the Russian Legation. Whether it would have been to the ultimate good of the country or not is a difficult question to answer, but, in the immediate result, Tehran would no doubt have been given over to pillage by the

so-called soldiery collected at Bagh-i-Shah, and immense damage would have been done before Zil-es-Sultan, or whoever else the people might have called upon to act as Regent, could have restored order.

As it is, the Popular party for the moment are stunned, and, so far as can be judged, have no thought of continuing the struggle, unless by taking bast at His Majesty's Legation. For it is undoubtedly to us, and to us alone, that they really look as the Power through which they obtained their political freedom. They are, of course, perfectly aware that we desire no more now than in 1906 to be mixed up in internal questions of this nature, but, having forced our hand two years ago, they cherish hopes of being able to do so again. They are now, however, without leaders; the Kajars and Nobles are, as a party, no longer to be counted on. Seyed Abdullah and Seyed Mohammed have been arrested, and the former deported from the capital; Musteshar-ed-Dowleh is a prisoner at Bagh-i-Shah, and Taki Zadeh is about to leave the country. Of the two great popular orators, Malek-el-Mutakellimin is dead, and Beha-ul-Vaizin in bast at the Legation, while Seyed Jemal is believed to have been captured. The lesser lights are in hiding, while half-hearted interested people, such as Muin-et-Tujjar and Amin-uz-Zerh, have purchased peace at various prices, and, with the exception of Mumtaz-ed-Dowleh, the ex-President of the Assembly, there is scarcely a man of prominence left. Though it would thus seem well nigh impossible that any move should be made, it is the opinion of many, who are in close touch with the masses in the bazaar, that the party is only waiting for an opportunity to renew the struggle. The only symptom of this at present is the attempt made by a crowd the night before last to force an entry into the Legation, but it is a very disquieting one, and I confess that for the moment I see no way of preventing it, unless by allowing the Shah to employ means similar to those for which we have just exacted a formal apology.

In the provinces, except at Tabreez, and perhaps to a small extent at Ispahan and Resht, there seems to be complete indifference as to the fate of the Medjliss. But this does not connote any particular affection for the Shah; on the contrary, I am rather inclined to the belief that the country as a whole would be glad to be rid of him, and would welcome a strong, if tyrannical, Ruler, such as the Zil-es-Sultan.

At the Court the utmost confusion appears to prevail. It seems certain that there are at present two parties, the one Russian, led by Colonel Liahoff, and the Persian, identified with Amir Behadur Jang, but neither seems for the moment to have gained real ascendancy in the Shah's councils. Besides these, there are a host of interested courtiers, any one of whom may for a moment obtain an influence over the weak-willed Shah.

No one knows who the Ministers are. Mushir-es-Sultaneh, Ala-es-Sultaneh, Kavem-ed-Dowleh, and Mushir-ed-Dowleh hold respectively the portfolios of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Justice, and I understand that numerous Viziers have been appointed for such Departments as the Telegraphs, the Post Office, &c., while Governors are appointed and recalled with bewildering rapidity. There is no fixed policy; at one moment the Shah seems disposed to clemency and conciliation, as when he appointed Zahle-ed-Dowleh, whose house was pillaged for harbouring an "Anjumen," to be Governor of Mazanderan, while at another he is all for severity, and, in spite of the general amnesty, allows arrests to go on unchecked.

The Russian Minister talks optimistically of the present calm as offering a good opportunity to model some reasonable form of government, to recast the Constitution and electoral laws, but, for myself, I fail to see by whom this is to be done. The only practical suggestion that has yet been put forward is that of M. Bizot for the formation of a kind of Board of Control at the Department of Finance, composed of himself, the Administrator of Customs, and one or two Persians, whom he knows and believes to be capable of honest work. The scheme, however, has not yet taken any definite shape.

The outlook appears very unpromising. The convocation of Parliament would be at best a palliative, as tending to restore confidence in the capital, but that it would do little, if anything, towards permanently establishing decent government is fairly well proved by the experience of the past year. Persia, in fact, is not yet fit for representative institutions, except in a very limited form. On the other hand, the Shah is unhappily entirely destitute of the statesmanlike qualities necessary to guide the country along the new path, even if he desired to do so. Nor has he the strength of character and fixity of purpose necessary to crush the popular movement, or even, supposing that to have been achieved by foreign assistance, to govern the country as an autocrat.

[1599]

The country is weary of the chaos of the last few years, and would, I believe, welcome any form of Government, autocratic or popular, so long as it is strong enough to maintain order and tranquillity. But, unless a strong man can be found to take the task in hand, it appears only too probable that the existing miserable state of affairs may continue indefinitely.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[26834]

No. 270.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 189.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 17, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a summary in translation of a very long letter which was addressed to me by Taki Zadeh a few days after he took refuge in the Legation.

The letter, which is strictly moderate in tone, gives a very accurate sketch of the situation here as seen by the most intelligent of the Nationalist leaders, and will, I think, be read with interest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 270.

Summary of Letter addressed by Taki Zadeh to Mr. Marling.

(Translation.)

AFTER detailed account of the deplorable state of Persia under a despotism, of the beginnings of the constitutional movement, of the moral support lent by Liberal England, of the moderation of the Assembly in the long struggle against the Shah and the Russians, he points out the responsibility of England for the destruction of the Constitution. The people were getting the better of the Shah in spite of the Russians, but after the Anglo-Russian Agreement the Russians were given a free hand and by trading on the steadfast co-operation of the British Legation tied the hands of the people by threatening the independence of Persia and representing England as their accomplice in supporting despotism. In this last affair the Assembly, distracted by Russian threats, and the passive attitude of England, prevented the Nationalists from resorting to armed opposition. The *coup d'Etat*, directed and financed by Russia, was a violation of the Agreement, which lays down complete neutrality and non-interference. Speaking, therefore, with the authority justified by the universal trust of the people in him, and as a representative of the nation, he begs the British Government in spite of political exigencies not to spoil their fair name as friends of nations struggling to be free, and to help the Persian people to preserve their Constitution. The Shah promised officially through the Russian and British Representatives to observe the Constitution, which by an Article of the Constitutional Law is not liable to interruption. By a rescript issued with the Constitution the Shah cannot dissolve the Assembly before the completion of its legal period. Therefore he hopes that His Majesty's Government will press for the immediate abolition of martial law and the reassembling of the present Medjliss, which are essential points if a semblance of liberty is to be preserved. He regrets that the *Chargé d'Affaires* cannot grant him an interview to explain his views at length, and he asks for friendly advice and help from England in the present trouble.

July 2, 1908.

[26835]

No. 271.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 190.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 17, 1908.

I AM quite unable to say who inspired the Shah to telegraph to His Majesty the King suggesting the advisability of my being recalled. Until I informed them of its

contents and of the King's reply, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Russian Minister both denied all knowledge of the telegram having been sent, but rumours of the existence of some message of the kind were certainly current in Tehran on the 29th ultimo, and it is hardly possible that they should not have reached the Russian Legation. M. de Hartwig's comment was merely "*quelle bêtise!*" Judging from the composition of the first part, the telegram could hardly be the production of a Persian. The most likely explanation is that the idea was the Shah's own, but that the message was actually drafted by some one at Court possessing a good knowledge of either French or English. The general belief here is that it was inspired by Colonel Liakhoff or M. Chapchal, but I have no proof whatever in support of such a theory, and am disposed to disbelieve it.

Your telegram informing me of it and of His Majesty's reply reached Gulahek when I was in Tehran, and I was unable to return early enough to prepare and send off the note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the same evening. I was in some doubt whether it was not the wish of His Majesty that I should deliver his reply personally, but fearing that the Shah might make difficulties about granting me an audience, I thought it better to send Mr. Churchill, who placed the King's reply in the Shah's hands early in the morning of the 1st instant. An account of his audience with the Shah is inclosed.

I venture again to offer my humble and grateful acknowledgments for His Majesty's gracious expression of confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 271.

Memorandum by Mr. Churchill.

IN accordance with your instructions I proceeded to Bagh-i-Shah early this morning with the translation of the telegram which His Majesty the King had addressed to the Shah in reply to his telegram.

I was received by Amir Behadur Jang in his tent at 7 A.M., and saw some of the prisoners with chains round their necks on the way. As the Shah was not yet dressed, I had to wait for an hour, during which time I conversed with Amir Behadur, who spoke very freely concerning recent events. He spoke very bitterly of M. Chapchal, whom he described to me as a lunatic. I seized the opportunity to question Amir Behadur respecting the prisoners, and to urge him to treat them humanely. I reminded him of the way in which the Prophet's son-in-law, Ali, had treated the man who struck the blow in the mosque at Cufa which eventually proved fatal to Ali. Amir Behadur, who pretends to be very pious, pretended to be much impressed, and assured me that the prisoners were being well treated. I also said a few words in favour of Serdar Mansur, in view of his English Order.

At about 8 o'clock we were told that the Shah was ready to receive me, and we went to the Anderoon door, as usual.

I handed the Shah the translation of His Majesty the King's telegram, which he read himself. When he had got about half-way through, he said: "I still maintain that the British Legation was never surrounded by soldiers. Wrong information has been given by intriguers."

He then read the telegram to the end, and said that he was very glad to see me; he had known me for ten years and trusted me, and I should give the *Chargé d'Affaires* good advice.

I replied that the *Chargé d'Affaires* had done his duty, and that the Shah had no reason to say this.

Continuing, he said that he wished to maintain friendly relations with all countries; Holland, Belgium, &c., and of course he was very anxious to maintain friendly relations with England, but the *Chargé d'Affaires* seemed to act as if the Persians were a civilized and noble people. Amir Behadur here interposed, saying: "Yes, they are noble, though not civilized." The Shah went on to say that he was very glad to hear that when he had moved the men (here he halted a little, and changed the sentence), when he had removed those who had been told to watch what went on round the Legation, it appeared that some people had come to the doors to seek refuge and had been turned away.

I said that of course they had been turned away. This was only what had been promised by the Chargé d'Affaires—surely the Shah was not surprised.

The Shah then said that he still maintained that the Chargé d'Affaires was entirely to blame. Why did not the King send a Minister?

I said the Shah had quite misunderstood the Chargé d'Affaires, and was continuing to speak when Amir Behadur again interposed, and said that he had met the Chargé d'Affaires by chance the previous evening, and had had a long conversation with him, and he now quite understood the situation. He asked the Shah to let him arrange matters in future with the Legation.

The Shah then said again that he was so pleased to see me, but the Nawab (Abbas Kuli Khan) was intriguing, and his brother (Hussein Kuli Khan) was quite mad.

I offered no remark.

The interview then came to an end.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

Gulabek, July 1, 1908.

[26860]

No. 272.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 331.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, July 25, 1908.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 22nd instant expressed great anxiety to me regarding events in Tabreez. He said that the state of complete anarchy which reigned there was full of danger. The Russian Consul-General had not as yet been molested, and the crowd had been careful to avoid attacking foreigners, but there was no guarantee that some such thing might not occur. I said that from the accounts which I had read M. Pokhotonow appeared to be very unpopular. M. Isvolsky replied that he had done nothing to deserve the popular dislike, for he had confined himself to acting as mediator between the factions. Quite recently he had proposed that the Mujtshids should be sent out of the town; that suggestion could not be construed as siding with the popular party.

M. Isvolsky then spoke of the enormous losses to Russian trade involved by the continuance of the disorders, and went on to say that, though Russia did not wish it, the situation might become such as to oblige her to intervene. I said it would be very unfortunate if Russia took such a step, and I reminded his Excellency that the two Governments had recently declared that they adhered to the policy of non-interference in Persia's internal affairs. M. Isvolsky repeated that Russia did not wish to intervene, and would do so only if circumstances made it unavoidable. In any case she would of course not act without previous consultation with His Majesty's Government.

I saw the Minister of Foreign Affairs again yesterday and reverted to this subject, explaining that what his Excellency had said on the 22nd instant caused me some uneasiness. I had understood that in conversations which had taken place between himself and His Majesty's Ambassador it had been agreed on both sides that there should be no intervention in Persia so long as the lives and property of British and Russian subjects were respected. His Excellency now spoke of losses to Russian trade; if Russia was going to act on the principle of intervening whenever her trade suffered it would carry her far. M. Isvolsky, in reply, assured me that there was no change whatever in the policy of the Russian Government in this matter. To intervene in Persia was "the last thing they desired." The losses to Russian trade would have to be "very great" indeed to bring about such a step. I must not take the words he had used on the 22nd instant to mean that Russia positively contemplated an act of intervention; he had merely wished to convey to me the apprehensions which he felt that circumstances might arise which would render it unavoidable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH O'BEIRNE.

[27118]

No. 273*.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 4.)

Sir,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, with its inclosures, as to the scheme for constructing, in concert with the Russian Government, a railway connecting Mohammerah and Northern Persia, with the object of protecting and developing British interests in Southern Persia.

It appears from Mr. O'Beirne's telegram No. 128 of the 28th July, that the Russian Government are prepared to accept in principle the scheme for a railway from Mohammerah to Julfa, and that, "in view of the importance attached by His Majesty's Government to an early application for the Concession, the Russian Government will release the Persian Government from the obligation to give no Concession before the end of 1910." Presumably, on the receipt of the *aide-memoire* promised by M. Isvolsky, the steps to obtain the necessary Concession from the Shah will be taken into immediate consideration.

Lord Morley recognizes fully the political and material advantages of securing the Concession, but he cannot regard without misgiving the financial aspect of the question, which will require very careful examination before steps finally to commit His Majesty's Government are taken. This examination is particularly necessary in the case of possible liabilities into which India might be drawn.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[27132]

No. 273.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 4.)

Sir,

India Office, August 1, 1908.

I AM directed by Viscount Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of a telegram from the Government of India and of the papers therein referred to as to the suggested acquisition by the D'Arcy Oil Syndicate of land on Abadan Island for the purpose of oil reservoirs.

Lord Morley finds no reason in the considerations urged by the Resident in the Gulf to modify the views expressed in my letter of the 22nd July. But it might, in his opinion, be desirable to act on the suggestion of the Resident, and to ascertain from the Syndicate what their views are as to acquiring land on Abadan (Kab) Island, which is stated in the Persian Gulf Gazetteer to be in the Mohammerah district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 273.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 27, 1908.

PLEASE refer to papers transmitted with letters, dated 4th ultimo and 2nd instant, from Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, regarding D'Arcy's Oil Syndicate. Political Agent, Bushire, telegraphs as follows:—

"The opinion was expressed in a recent letter from the Engineer, Oil Syndicate, to the Vice-Consul at Ahwaz that, for location of oil reservoirs, Syndicate would want to acquire ground on Abadan Island, opposite Mohammerah, and he was hoping on his way home to discuss question of provision with me. The views of His Majesty's Government as to the assurances to be given to the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and the conditions thereof, may be affected by the knowledge that we may shortly need Sheikh's good-will and co-operation in this connection. The matter is therefore reported, with the suggestion that the Syndicate in London might be interrogated by His Majesty's Government as to what they are likely to require."

[26807]

No. 274.

Sir G. Louthier to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 214.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 4, 1908.

THE Persian Ambassador has asked me to communicate the following to you, but I did not undertake to do so:—

Incited by the Young Turks and by their religious superiors, the Persians in Constantinople made a demonstration at their Embassy, demanding—

1. That Rahim Khan, of Tabreez, and his horsemen should be suppressed;
2. That the press should be free;
3. That measures for the assembly of the Medjliss should be taken without delay.

His Excellency thinks that if these demands, which he has forwarded to Tehran, are not acceded to, all the Persians in Turkey, as well as thousands in Persia, will become Turkish subjects; that this would make the state of things in Persia much worse; and that it is therefore of great importance to advise the Shah to yield to them.

[27101]

No. 275.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 262.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 4, 1908.

REFUGEES. With reference to my telegram No. 261 of the 3rd instant.

The bastis in Gulabek still refuse to depart, and I suggest asking the Persian Government to furnish me with a sufficient number of gendarmes or police to procure their expulsion by force. Would you approve such a course?

I believe similar steps will be taken by the Turkish Ambassador.

[27102]

No. 276.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 263.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 4, 1908.

COSSACKS at Gulabek. With reference to my telegram No. 261 of the 3rd instant.

This question is now, in my opinion, closed satisfactorily.

[26106]

No. 277.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 4, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that a Company entitled "Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons (Limited)," trading at 111, Portland Street, Manchester, are contemplating an application to the Persian Government for a Concession to extract red oxide on the Island of Sirri, in the Persian Gulf.

This application is to be made through Hadji Ali Asgar, who is understood to be the son of Hadji Ali Akbar, and a Persian subject.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive such confidential information as it may be in the power of the Board of Trade to furnish regarding the constitution and standing of the Company in question, more particularly as to whether it is a British enterprise.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[26106]

No. 278.

Foreign Office to Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons.

Gentlemen,

Foreign Office, August 4, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated "July," purporting to convey an assurance of the nature demanded in the letter of the 3rd instant from this Office in connection with the Concession which you desire to obtain for the extraction of red oxide in the Island of Sirri.

I am to point out to you in reply that the assurance given by you in this communication differs materially in the following respects from that which you were asked to furnish:—

1. While giving an assurance that you will control the Concession in British interests, you do not definitely state that your Company is a British one.
2. You do not undertake positively not to transfer the Concession nor allow it to be shared in by any foreigner, but merely state that it is not intended to do so. Moreover, your reservation of the right to transfer the Concession to, or share it with, constituent members of your Company would not preclude the possibility of its

passing into foreign hands should any foreigner, now or in the future, come under that description.

I am accordingly to invite you to amend the form of your guarantee so as to cover the points mentioned above.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[27254]

No. 279.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 5.)

(No. 264.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 5, 1908.

I AM asked by Zil-es-Sultan to send some one to accompany him, as he states that he has information that his life will be attempted on his journey to Tehran. On Saturday he leaves Ispahan.

I propose not to assent unless the same is done by the Russian Legation. I much doubt his being in real danger.

[27243]

No. 280.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 5.)

(No. 265.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 5, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports that the grant of a Constitution at Constantinople has been announced by the Turkish Consul-General there. The revolutionaries, who appear encouraged by this news, have posted up placards on the mosque calling on the population of the town to overwhelm the Shah's party. The manifesto ends by declaring that the Sultan might not prove inferior to the Shah in the capacity of Ruler.

[27263]

No. 281.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 5.)

(No. 266.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 5, 1908.

REFUGEES in Gulabek village. My telegram No. 262 of the 4th instant.

I venture to request immediate reply. There will be possibility of further arrivals to-morrow evening, when bazaars will be closed for Friday, and I should like to be able to remove bastis before then to avoid this.

[27294]

No. 282.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 6.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 1st instant, relative to the Taona murders.

India Office, August 5, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 282.

Viscount Morley to the Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 1, 1908.

CERTAIN recommendations, in accordance with suggestions from Resident in Gulf, have been made by Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran for the capture and punishment

of Taona murderers. It is considered that instructions to following effect might be sent to *Chargé d'Affaires* :—

"Suggestions by His Majesty's Consul-General, Bushire, for effecting the capture of culprits are approved, but from point of view of international law there are difficulties in sending them, as you propose, to India for trial. Best course to follow, having regard to the improbability of punishment or compensation being obtained through trial in Persian Court, would be to send the men for trial and punishment to Abu Thabi, and to detain them until the Chief of Taona has paid compensation for families of victims. Arrangements might be made, should this course be impracticable, for the detention of offenders at Abu Thabi till we obtain a satisfactory undertaking that on their return to Persian soil they will be properly tried and punished. His Majesty's Consul-General, Bushire, should be instructed by you to adopt whichever he thinks preferable of these alternative courses."

I shall be glad to have your views on these suggested instructions without delay.

[27260]

No. 283.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 6.)

(No. 216.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

PERSIANS in Constantinople.

Constantinople, August 6, 1908.

With reference to my telegram No. 214 of the 3rd instant, the Persian Ambassador here has received a reply from the Shah. He seems to think that it will prove satisfactory to his compatriots.

[27101]

No. 284.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 199.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

REFUGEES at Gulahek.

Foreign Office, August 6, 1908.

The action proposed in your telegram No. 262 of the 4th instant has my approval. Bast can only be allowed in case of imminent danger to life, and you should make the position of His Majesty's Legation in this respect clear to the refugees.

[26791]

No. 285.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 200.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SITUATION at Tabreez.

Foreign Office, August 6, 1908.

I agree with the views expressed in your telegram No. 260 of the 2nd instant.

[26511]

No. 286.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 201.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 6, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 197 of the 31st July relative to the Hormuz red oxide,

Ellinger and Strick hope to get contract for 20,000 tons from Moin.

Ellinger asserts that Wöneckhaus has obtained one for 2,000 tons annually.

[27422]

No. 297.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 7.)

Sir,

India Office, August 6, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 30th January, 1907, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to inclose, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a Secret letter from the Government of India as to the Consular guard at Bunder Abbas,* proposing, in lieu of the scheme for a cavalry guard of sixteen men put forward with my above-mentioned letter, that the present guard, which consists of four mounted men, should be strengthened by the addition of a detachment of sixteen infantry.

The cost involved in the proposal is approximately as follows :—

Initial ..	£
Recurring (on an average of three years) ..	408
	720 a-year.

Lord Morley would be glad to be favoured with Sir E. Grey's views on the subject. He recognizes the necessity of affording adequate protection to the Consulate, and will be prepared to sanction such an increase of the existing guard as Sir E. Grey may think requisite, on the understanding that the cost will be equally divided between the British and Indian exchequers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[27472]

No. 288.

Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons to Foreign Office.—(Received August 7.)

Sir,

111, Portland Street, Manchester, August 6, 1908.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant. We regret to find that you should have any criticism to offer upon the form of the letter we addressed to you, dated July. It was intended to embody a guarantee on our part in the terms you had desired. In reply to what you now write we have to say :—

1. The records of your Office will show that we are a British Company, duly incorporated and registered under the English Companies Acts, and we have further solicited and obtained from your British protection *vis-à-vis* the Persian authorities. The constitution of our Company is thus solely British; we have no other status either here, in Persia, or elsewhere.

2. We have no hesitation in giving you the positive assurance you require that we will not transfer or allow the Concession to be shared in by any foreigner.

We have, &c.
(For Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons (Limited)),
(Signed) HUSSEIN AGHA, Managing Director.

[27489]

No. 289.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 7.)

(No. 267.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 7, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 201 of yesterday respecting Hormuz red oxide. I am informed by Moin-ut-Tajjar that he has instructed Ellinger to accept Strick's offer for 20,000 tons, but he will not be responsible for the quality. He has 15,000 tons lying ready to be shipped.

He adds that negotiations with Germans for 2,000 tons will probably not lead to any result, as they are dragging at present.

[27254]

No. 290.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 202.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 7, 1908.

I APPROVE the action you propose in your telegram No. 264 of the 5th August with regard to Zil-es-Sultan.

[27553]

No. 291.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 8.)

Sir,

India Office, August 6, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 6th July, 1908, regarding the maintenance of the branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia at Nasratabad, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley, after careful reconsideration, can only repeat the doubts expressed in my letter of the 2nd June last as to the advantage of the existing arrangements. The figures of the net earnings of this branch from 1903 to 1907 would not seem to justify any favourable forecast of the prospects of the branch, nor does Lord Morley find in Sir T. Jackson's communication the precise grounds on which he builds his hope that the branch may become self-supporting in the future. A circumstantial account of the operations of the branch was furnished to the Government of India in August 1907 by Major Kinnion; he pronounced that they had been a failure, alike as a political instrument and as a help to trade. Lord Morley is inclined to doubt whether an experiment for two years more would be likely to reverse the experience of the four years that are now closed, and he would hardly feel justified in recommending to the Indian Council a continuance of the subsidy from the heavily loaded revenues of India, even for a short term.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[27590]

No. 292.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 268.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 8, 1908.

THE agitators in Gubek, with the exception of twelve, whom I have hopes of getting rid of without using force in a day or two, left yesterday.

The bastis at the Turkish Embassy left on the 6th instant.

[27608]

No. 293.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 269.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 8, 1908.

GUARD of Shiraz Consulate. Your telegram No. 185 of the 23rd ultimo.

I have been requested by Government of India to arrange with His Majesty's Consul for provisional horses as time-expired men are about to be relieved.

Major Stokes is of opinion that we should buy six horses at once.

I think expenditure should be sanctioned, as situation in Shiraz is unlikely to improve within six months.

[27812]

No. 294.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received August 10.)

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, August 8, 1908.

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Mr. Mallet's letter of the 13th ultimo, and its inclosures, relative to a proposal that

Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking, an officer with the escort at Ahwaz, should be placed on duty for a period not exceeding five months, on his present emoluments, to assist His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that place with the object of affording increased facilities for touring and of enabling Lieutenant Ranking to acquire sufficient experience to act as Vice-Consul when Captain Lorimer goes on long leave early next year.

In reply, I am to request you to inform Secretary Sir Edward Grey that my Lords offer no objection to the financial part of this proposal, but they would ask the Secretary of State to consider whether it is advisable that the Vice-Consul should be permitted to tour off the main routes during the present condition of affairs in Persia.

The Secretary of State will doubtless remember that in 1904 Captain Lorimer and Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas were attacked in Luristan while touring on the public service, with the result that considerable expenditure in respect of compensation for injuries had to be borne by the Indian and British Exchequers.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. L. HEATH.

[27841]

No. 295.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 10.)

(No. 270.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 10, 1908.

MY telegram No. 167 of the 7th instant on the subject of Hormuz oxide.

I have now been informed by Moin-et-Tujar that his negotiations with the German firm have fallen through. These negotiations were, he states, merely for the sale of 2,000 tons.

[26819]

No. 296.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 10, 1908.

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 23rd March last relative to the inspection and repair of bridges on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has received a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran stating that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, who had been instructed to inform the Bakhtiari Khans of the repairs which your Company propose to carry out on the Godar bridge, has reported by telegraph from Ispahan that the necessary communication has been made in writing to their Excellencies, but that no reply has yet been received from them.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[26400]

No. 297.

Foreign Office to Mr. F. C. Strick.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 10, 1908.

WITH reference to your desire to enter into a contract with the Moin-et-Tujjar for the purchase from him, under the Concession which he holds from the Persian Government, of all the red oxide on the Island of Hormuz, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that His Majesty's Government are willing to give you the following assurances:—

1. That, so far as His Majesty's Government are aware, the Concession to the Moin is in perpetuity. The Firman and Rescript confirming it have been seen at the British Legation at Tehran.

2. That, whatever happens as between the Moin and the Persian Government in respect of the future of the Concessions, His Majesty's Government will see that every possible effort is made to prevent interference with the rights secured to you by

your Agreement with the Moin under his Concession, and to see that your rights and interests are respected.

3. That His Majesty's Government will unofficially do all they can in case of need to bring pressure to bear upon the Moin or his successors to carry out his obligations under this contract.

I am to state that His Majesty's Government are prepared to give the above-mentioned assurances, subject to the condition that they will only hold good so long as the enterprise remains British, and I am to request that this letter may be considered as strictly private and confidential.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[27963]

No. 298.

Messrs. Strick and Co. to Mr. Mallet.—(Received August 11.)

*Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,
August 10, 1908.*

Dear Mr. Mallet,

THANK you for your letter of the 10th instant. It is, I agree, regrettable that, after all the trouble taken by you, Sir Richmond Ritchie, and Mr. Wilson Fox, the negotiations should have fallen through.

My position was this: I made a firm offer to take 8,000 tons per annum for two and a-half years, *i.e.*, 20,000 tons at 42s. 6d., on the same terms as last contract. Messrs. Ellinger's reply, on behalf of the Mouinutojar, was that they would agree quantity and price, but coupled with certain conditions, which I detail for your information:—

1. The responsibility for the protection of the oxide, of which 15,000 tons are stated to be mined, and the remaining 5,000 tons to be ready in four months, to rest entirely upon the buyers, *i.e.*, my firm.

2. Payment to be made on the 31st of this month for 5,000 tons, *i.e.*, 10,625*l.*, and the balance at the rate of 500 tons in each month.

3. Quality to be the usual quality, but not superior to last shipment per "Arabistan."

4. My firm to agree to allow Messrs. Wonekhaus to have 2,000 tons at 60s. *c.i.f.* if required.

5. We to take over the charter of the steam-ship "Auchendale," to carry 5,500 tons, of which 2,500 tons must go to Germany, or incur extra freight for delivery in the Bristol Channel.

My objections to these conditions are very serious, and may be summarized as follows:—

1. I understood after our various interviews that His Majesty's Government would extend their support to my firm in case of difficulties arising in regard to delivery of the oxide at Ormuz *f.o.b.* our steamers, but it must not be overlooked that, by the terms of contract, we have to give what are practically promissory notes for the payment of the oxide on certain dates, whether we have or have not taken delivery, and it is expressly provided that we shall raise no defence to any action taken to enforce payment under certain conditions. In fact, the whole contract is one of the most one-sided documents that has ever come before me. You will doubtless remember that at one of our interviews Mr. Wilson Fox made a remark to the effect that Messrs. Ellinger and Co. would be responsible for the due carrying out of the contract, and I replied that I could not see how Messrs. Ellinger and Co., acting as agents, could be held responsible, provided they merely carried out the instructions of their principal. Mr. Wilson Fox, however, did not agree with my view. I may mention that last week, in conversation with Mr. Ellinger, I raised the point of the responsibility of his firm, and he simply laughed at the idea. I may say that, so far as any recourse against the Mouinutojar is concerned, I have always regarded the contract as being worth no more than the paper on which it is written.

2. My objection to this condition is to some extent comprised in what I have written regarding No. 1. If we have given a definite undertaking to make payment as

specified in the contract, we are in a poor position for recovering the cost of putting the oxide *f.o.b.* in case of the Mouinutojar failing to do so.

3. The shipment per "Arabistan" referred to is the worst shipment of oxide we have ever had, and it does not represent the usual quality of oxide mined and shipped at Ormuz.

4. By allowing Messrs. Wonekhaus to call on us to deliver 2,000 tons at 60s. *c.i.f.*, we should simply be putting ourselves in a position to be blackmailed, as, naturally, with a view to having the selling price maintained, we should be practically obliged to agree to whatever they liked to propose.

5. With reference to the charter of the "Auchendale," I have to say that in the first place the rates named are from 3s. to 4s. above the rates of the day. In the second place, by the terms of the charter-party, we should have to discharge 2,500 tons at Hamburg (which port serves a market which can only take, say, 1,500 tons in a year) or else pay an additional rate for discharging in the Bristol Channel. In the third place, the demurrage clause in the charter-party throws on us the responsibility for any demurrage incurred in loading at Ormuz, and, as this is by far the largest cargo ever proposed to be loaded there (shipments are usually about 1,200 tons), this may be a very serious matter.

Taking the whole position into consideration, I must say that if Messrs. Wonekhaus are willing to take the contract on these terms, they are welcome to it.

In conclusion, I may add that I have been under the impression, rightly or wrongly, throughout the negotiations, that His Majesty's Government has been anxious that any business of this nature should not be allowed to fall into German hands. This I quite recognize, and am perfectly willing to do whatever I can to assist, but I am not prepared to incur the very grave responsibilities involved in the acceptance of the terms proposed above for the chance of realizing a small profit.

I am sorry to have to trouble you with so long a letter, but I thought it best to put the whole position perfectly plainly before you.

I am, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. STRICK.

[27975]

No. 299.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 271.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 11, 1908.

YOUR despatch No. 43 of the 23rd March last, respecting the Bakhtiari road.

The Bakhtiari Khans have agreed to pay repairs of Godar bridge in principle, but they require a definite estimate. This is indispensable in opinion of Vice-Consul, and he suggests alternative proposals which he might be authorized to submit to the Khans. They are—

1. That a fixed sum should be named by the Company, who would execute repairs *à forfait*; or that

2. The Company to charge actual cost after giving a very closely approximate estimate; this estimate to be very slightly exceeded in any case.

The Khans refuse to give the Company *carte blanche*, and if the Company rejects these alternatives the Vice-Consul can do no more.

[27812]

No. 300.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 204.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 11, 1908.

ADWAZ Vice-Consulate.

Half the cost of the arrangement proposed in your telegram No. 207 of the 20th July in connection with Lieutenant Ranking will be borne by the Treasury, who have, however, inquired whether it is advisable, in view of the attack in 1904 on

[1599]

B E

Captain Lorimer and Colonel Douglas, to permit Vice-Consul during present condition of affairs in Persia to go on tours away from the main routes.

Is there, in your opinion, such danger attendant on the proposal as to render it objectionable?

[27608]

No. 301.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 205.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

SHIRAZ escort.

Expenditure for horses recommended in your telegram No. 269 of the 8th August is sanctioned.

Foreign Office, August 11, 1908.

[27116]

No. 302.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

(Very Confidential.)

Sir.

Foreign Office, August 11, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st April last, stating that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury are unable to sanction the proposal that the Imperial Government should bear half the cost involved in the acquisition by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the control of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah.

Sir E. Grey much regrets their Lordships' decision, in view of the great and undoubted advantage to Imperial interests which would result from the realization of this proposal, and the relative insignificance of the sum which His Majesty's Government are called upon to contribute to this object.

A failure on the part of His Majesty's Government to acquire the control of the line which the Persian Government have now twice requested them to take over could hardly fail to result in a similar request being, sooner or later, preferred to another foreign Power, which is very unlikely to refuse such an opportunity of gaining influence in the zone rendered neutral by the recent Anglo-Russian Convention, along the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Should such a result ensue, the next step, and one which would offer little difficulty, would be the connection of the line with the Turkish telegraph system at Bussorah or Fao, and its extension to Bandar Abbas.

It is clear that the Power which controls the terminus on the Persian Gulf of the future Bagdad Railway should also control the telegraph line under discussion, and the serious results, from the point of view of British interests, which would follow the completion of that railway without the co-operation of His Majesty's Government, are fully recognized.

The control of the line has further importance in connection with future railway construction in this part of Persia, which is quickly becoming a practical question.

It appears to Sir E. Grey, therefore, that the acquisition of the control of the line is of the highest political moment, and that failure to acquire it with as little delay as possible, whereby the field would be left clear to foreign enterprise, would be most unfortunate.

He is further of opinion that, in view of the considerations set forth above, the outlay involved in the transaction may be regarded as a valuable investment from an Imperial as well as from an Indian standpoint.

I am further to point out that the present proposal is not one for the acquisition of possession of the line, which will retain its present character of a Persian Crown line, but that it is merely desired to obtain the right to control and work it, an arrangement for which precedents already exist in Persia itself.

Thus, the Tehran-Meshed telegraph line has been controlled and worked in this way for more than twenty years, and the Tehran-Bushire line since 1861. The Central Persian line from Tehran to the frontier of India occupies a similar position.

It is true that in the cases cited no contribution is made from Imperial funds, but Sir E. Grey considers that there are in the present instance good grounds for such payment which do not exist in connection with the other lines.

I am to transmit to you herewith paraphrase of a telegram from His Majesty's

Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, dated the 24th ultimo,* giving reasons for considering the present moment exceptionally favourable for the completion of the transaction, and I am to express the hope that their Lordships may see their way to reconsider their decision on this question and signify their assent to the proposed arrangement with as little delay as may be convenient.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[26813]

No. 303.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir.

Foreign Office, August 11, 1908.

IN the first paragraph of the Memorandum, communicated to this office by Mr. J. D. Rees, M.P., on the 16th April last, and containing suggestions as to the steps which, in that gentleman's opinion, should be taken to advance British interests in southern and western Persia in view of the situation created by the recent Anglo-Russian Convention (see inclosure in my letter of the 6th May), it was stated that a Concession for certain roads in that country, as well as for "trains Renard" throughout its whole extent, is held by a Persian subject.

I am to inform you that, on the receipt of this Memorandum, Secretary Sir Edward Grey instructed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran to furnish him with any information which it might be possible to obtain regarding this Concession, and that he has now received a despatch from Mr. Marling, copy of which is inclosed,† forwarding a copy of the text of the document in question.

I am to point out that this Concession would appear to be deprived of its importance by the fact that the conditions laid down by its 14th Article have not been fulfilled by the concessionnaires.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28059]

No. 304.

Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received August 12.)

Sir.

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,
August 11, 1908.

WITH reference to our letter of the 5th June, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a letter received from our Ahwaz Agent giving an account of the high-handed proceedings taken by an agent of the Mouin-et-Tejar at Shellilieh against our agents, who were endeavouring to erect the shed on the premises acquired by them; also a copy of their later letter on this subject. Our agents have now forwarded all the title-deeds to the Legation.

The Mouin-et-Tejar is used by the Persian Government to obstruct as much as possible British enterprise on the Karun River; and it is therefore only natural that Persian officials should uphold his claim to the land, which certainly, as is proved by our very careful investigations, does not belong to him. The object in putting him forward is obviously to obstruct the building of the shed and to attempt to saddle this Company with a very troublesome lessor of the land.

For this reason my Board regrets that the prompt and vigorous action recommended by His Majesty's Legation was not locally followed up.

The matter has dragged for years and has become a scandal. The question of the title has been minutely gone into, each stage of it having been followed by His Majesty's Legation. To allow the whole question to be raised *de novo* seems to us to be a mistake; and we would therefore urge that pressure should be brought to bear on the Persian Government to prevent the Mouin, who is their Agent, from further interference; and in view of the interminable delays which have attended the settlement

* No. 209.

† No. 255.

of this matter we would respectfully request that a telegram in the above sense be dispatched to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Tehran, as our contractor is at a standstill with his operations and the matter is urgent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. MACLEAN, *Secretary*.

Inclosure 1 in No. 304.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers to Persian Transport Company, London.

Ahwaz, May 14, 1908.

THE Persian Government has effectively put a stop to our work at Shellilieh. A telegram from his Excellency Nizam-es-Sultaneh was received by the Acting Governor of Shushtar a few days ago, in which the latter was instructed to prevent us from doing anything further towards the erection of the proposed store. The builder, and others, mud-brick makers, coolies, carriers, &c., were thereupon informed that unless they immediately desisted from the work they were engaged upon they would be punished. Under these circumstances Captain Lorimer advises us to make no further attempt until the matter has been thrashed out, as it now definitely will be, in Tehran. He has at the same time telegraphed the present state of affairs to Tehran.

If the Legation will only hold to their guns, there can be but one issue to the controversy, for we are perfectly satisfied in our own minds that the Seyds hold documentary evidence of the most convincing nature of the soundness of their claim.

We confirm our wire, as per copy inclosed, mentioning briefly the points above noted.

Inclosure 2 in No. 304.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers to Persian Transport Company, London.

(Telegraphic.)
[Undated.]
GOVERNMENT Shushtar, acting under instructions from the Persian Government, will not allow builder to continue the work on the Shellilieh shed. Acting upon advice Vice-Consul for Ahwaz all operations suspended until the matter is settled Tehran.

Inclosure 3 in No. 304.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers to Persian Transport Company, London.

Ahwaz, April 30, 1908.

April 17.—Pegged out the site for the building. This operation would have been done on my previous visit had it not been for the fact that, owing to an exceptionally heavy rise in the river, the whole of the Cham was flooded to a depth of some 2 or 3 feet.

Arranged for the transport of the stone by road and by river. Received a visit from Alam, the Mouin's agent, who, much to everyone's surprise, had been liberated by the Khans. The object of this gentleman's visit was to protest against our operations, and to give notice that unless we resisted he would use force. I deprecated any such proposal, and suggested to him another line of action, viz., that he should allow matters to proceed as they are, and, if he or the Mouin had any claim to the ground occupied by us, such claims should be made through the proper channel, supported by evidence. I mentioned that the only documentary evidence which had so far been produced, proved decisively that the ground in question belonged to Sheikh Mortaza and Seyd Mahomed. I further mentioned that, on the other hand, if the Mouin could produce better titles to the land we should be quite ready to treat with him for the erection of our store. We would, of course, do no more than transfer the Agreement from the one party to the other. We desired to favour neither party. What we required was to find the rightful owner of the land and to treat with him for our shed. The Alam, whose temper was scarcely under control, would listen to no reason. Indeed, it was, he said, a question

of now or never. If he cared to make the Agreement now, well and good, for it would be our last chance. The interview then came to an end.

April 19.—I left again for Ahwaz.

April 24.—We received a wire from Shushtar stating that the actual transport of the material had commenced the previous day. After a day's work, Alam had got wind of what was going on, and, with some half-a-dozen servants, went down to Shellilieh, and commenced hustling our carriers, threatening violence unless they desisted; he bound up one of our watchmen, and would have thrown him into the river, had not some people who were looking on interfered.

April 25.—Transport of material discontinued pending reference to Ahwaz.

April 26.—We wired Shushtar to proceed with the work in the face of any opposition short of bloodshed. The work is still proceeding.

In view of serious opposition we placed the matter in the hands of Captain Lorimer, who promptly wired the Legation. The latter replied instructing Captain Lorimer to remind the Sheikh that we claim his support on the strength of the Treaty of Turkomanahia.

April 28.—Captain Lorimer replied to effect that the matter could not be fought out on any Treaty, but that it is a question as to whom is the rightful owner of the Cham at Shellilieh.

On this date Captain Lorimer received a note from Sheikh Khazzel, informing him of the receipt by him of a telegram from the Nizam-es-Sultaneh, in which he states that the Persian Government do not admit Sheikh Mortaza's claim to any portion of the Cham, that the land belongs to the Mouin, and that the action of Messrs. Lynch Brothers is illegal.

[28085]

No. 305.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 272.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 12, 1908.

CONSULAR tours in South Persia: Your telegram No. 204 of yesterday's date.

I am cautioning Vice-Consul, and I think there is no objection, as he may be relied on to exercise the greatest prudence.

[27422]

No. 306.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 206.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 176 of last year relative to the Consular guard at Bunder Abbas.

It is proposed by the Government of India that the guard should be reinforced by sixteen infantry, instead of, as originally suggested, by twelve cavalry. Do you concur in this proposal?

The guard is at present composed of four cavalry (see letter from Government of India of the 11th June marked Secret).

[28196]

No. 307.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 11th instant, relative to the Taona murders.

India Office, August 13, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 307.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 11, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 1st instant, as to Taona murders, we have to state that no information as to suggestions made to Marling by Cox has reached us beyond what is contained in Marling's telegraphic reference to No. 220, Foreign Office, of the 15th ultimo. We do not, however, see any objection to the instructions it is proposed to issue.

{ 28200 }

No. 308.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 13.)

(No. 273.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 13, 1908.

SIRRI oxide. His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire, in a telegram No. 197, dated the 12th instant, states that, according to a report which he has received from the Residency Agent at Lingah, instructions were recently sent by Moin to his agent at Lingah to go to Sirri and Hamisan for the purpose of examining the oxide at these places, and ordering him to send him specimens, &c. The agent, in reply, said that the heat was too great to go there now, but that he would go in the month of Nizan.

Residency Agent further states that Abdallah Zelladâri may interest himself on behalf of Mr. Brown and Hassan-bin-Sameyeh if he is not now acting for his principals Haji Ali Akbar. He is said to be very friendly with Mr. Brown and Hassan-bin-Sameyeh.

{ 26831 }

No. 309.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 250. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copies of two despatches from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,* relative to the recent *coup d'État* in Persia and the part played in that event by the Russian Legation, together with copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Mr. Marling,† conveying to him the approval of His Majesty's Government of the attitude maintained by him during the period described.

The acute stage of the crisis in Persia now appears to be at an end, and the transfer of the Russian Minister at Tehran by his own desire is, I understand, in contemplation.

In these circumstances no useful purpose would, in my opinion, be served by making a formal complaint of the unscrupulous conduct of M. de Hartwig, and of his disloyal attitude towards Mr. Marling.

I desire, nevertheless, to call your Excellency's attention to Mr. Marling's despatches, which clearly show how serious the situation was, and how far its gravity was increased by the attitude of the Russian Representative.

I leave it to your discretion as to whether, after the removal of M. de Hartwig, you should call M. Isvolsky's attention to the matter, and explain to his Excellency how matters stood.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

* Nos. 259 and 267.

† No. 310.

{ 26821 }

No. 310.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 143.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1908.

I HAVE received your despatches No. 176 of the 15th ultimo, giving a complete account of the events connected with the recent *coup d'État* in Persia, and No. 186, Very Confidential, of the following day, setting forth the cause of the strained relations between His Majesty's and the Russian Legations to which those events have given rise.

These despatches have been read with great interest, and I have to inform you that the great difficulty in which you were placed during the progress of the events recorded is fully recognized by His Majesty's Government, who cordially approve the firmness and forbearance with which you dealt with a succession of very disagreeable situations.

Had you shown less patience in the very trying circumstances in which you found yourself, developments might easily have ensued which would have involved far-reaching and serious complications.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

{ 27975 }

No. 311.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 10th instant relative to the proposed repairs to the Godar Bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, according to a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, dated the 11th instant, the reply of the Bakhtiari Khans on this subject has now reached him through His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz.

This reply is to the effect that their Excellencies agree in principle to pay for the repairs, but require an estimate of their cost which, in the opinion of Captain Lorimer, is indispensable to furnish to them.

Captain Lorimer proposes that he should receive authority to propose to the Chiefs either that your Company should submit a very close approximate estimate, only to be very slightly exceeded in any case, and that they should charge the actual cost of the repairs, or that they should name a fixed sum and carry out the repairs *à forfait*.

I am to inquire what reply your directors would desire to be returned to Mr. Marling's telegram, and I am to add that, in that gentleman's opinion, the Khans will be unwilling to give your Company *carte blanche*, and if both the suggested alternatives are rejected it will be out of Captain Lorimer's power to afford any further assistance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

{ 28217 }

No. 312.

Consul-General Oppenheimer to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 14.)

(No. 6. Commercial. Confidential.)

Sir,

Frankfort-on-Maine, August 14, 1908.

I HAVE the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Excellency's despatch No. 4, Commercial, dated the 24th ultimo, concerning a report which has recently been published in a financial newspaper to the effect that the German Palestina Bank of Berlin is increasing its share capital, and that the issue has been taken over by Prince Hohenlohe and the "Handelsvereinigung" with the intention of increasing its sphere of activity and working in competition with the Deutsche Orient Bank, and asking me to furnish a report on the financial situation of the bank in question and of

the "Handelsvereinigung," and to send any confirmation of its reported expansion that may be obtainable.

In reply, I beg to state as follows:—

The "Handelsvereinigung Actiengesellschaft in Berlin" is a development out of the Company which had been known as the "Madeira Actiengesellschaft," which latter had been founded with a capital of 3,000,000 marks to acquire from Portugal a Concession for the establishment of certain buildings in the Island of Madeira. When the Directorate of this Company had come to the conclusion that the negotiations could not be carried to a satisfactory end, the Company was reconstituted with a capital of 12,000,000 marks in 12,000 shares of 1,000 marks each. The founders of the original Company (1905) had been Prince Friedrich Carl zu Hohenlohe-Oehringen (hereafter called Prince Friedrich Carl), Hofrath Hecht, Councillor of Legation (retired), Vom Rath, &c. The Board of Directors of the present Company includes Prince Friedrich Carl (above referred to), Hofrath Hecht, Prince Max Egon zu Fürstenberg-Donaueschingen, &c. The new Company does not include Prince Christian Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Oehringen, who had been connected with the first Company.

Prince Christian Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Oehringen (hereafter called Prince Christian Kraft) is the elder brother of Prince Friedrich Carl and the head of this branch of the family. He owns vast territories in Silesia which are rich in natural resources—chiefly zinc and coal—and in consequence he has become what the Germans call a "Gross-industrieller," i.e., a giant of commercial enterprise. His mines are worked by various Companies, which have been brought out by the "Berliner Handels-Gesellschaft" (one of the leading banks of Germany), the Prince, however, being in most Companies represented by a seat on the Board. These Companies have been prosperous, and, the wealth of the Prince being notorious, he has in course of time acquired a financial following of no mean importance. It created quite a stir to find his name connected with the "Madeira Gesellschaft," and the fact that he severed his connection with that concern, and has so far taken no share in the new Company, tends to prove that neither the one nor the other is absolutely above suspicion.

In financial circles the reputation of the younger brother, Prince Friedrich Carl, is none too good. He is known to be a gambler, rich one day and poor the next; he inherited no fortune of his own, and any invested sums which he may possess must have originated out of his brother's fortune, as even his country seat (once the property of Baron Hirsch) belongs to his brother.

The financial reputation of Hofrath Hecht, also on the Board of the "Handelsvereinigung," is no better than that of Prince Friedrich Carl.

Prince Max Egon zu Fürstenberg, also on the Board of the "Handelsvereinigung," is to-day one of the richest men in Germany. The property which he owned was not rich like that of Prince Christian Kraft, and yielded, I believe, chiefly brown coal, but a few years since he inherited enormous wealth, amounting to many million marks, from a cousin (the line of Donaueschingen). Since then he has financially interested himself in industrial concerns—it is mooted at the German Emperor's instigation. Not being a born financier, he has not shown the same discretion in all his enterprises, but there can be no doubt as to his *bona fides*. This seems proven by the following fact: Before he consented to interest himself in any of the concerns with which Prince Christian Kraft is connected, he insisted that Prince Christian Kraft's financial confidant and adviser (called Knoepfelmacher) should be dismissed because he was believed not to work with clean hands, and Prince Christian Kraft did in fact get rid of this gentleman, though up to that time he had in most financial matters acted as his *homme d'affaire*.

Among various other financial enterprises, the "Handelsvereinigung" entered into negotiations to acquire the control of the Deutsche Levant Linie, which it obtained a short time since—it is said to the entire satisfaction of the Hamburg-Amerika Paketfahrtgesellschaft as represented by Director Ballin, who was delighted to rid himself of this so far un lucrative burden. It is characteristic of the lofty plans of the "Handelsvereinigung," as led by Prince Friedrich Carl, that it hinted that the Levante Linie was to be the starting-point for a maritime shipping concern which was in course of time to vie in importance with such standard concerns as the Hamburg-Amerika Paketfahrtgesellschaft and the Norddeutscher Lloyd.

One of the most recent financial schemes in which the "Handelsvereinigung" has interested itself is the Palestina Bank. This bank has hitherto worked with a comparatively small capital (1,000,000 marks); the operations of the bank have in

consequence been considerably restricted, and the results obtained have been by no means brilliant. On several occasions the bank is said to have shown want of judgment. The ordinary shareholders have received no dividends within the last three years, while the preference shareholders have received 5 per cent., 6 per cent., and 6 per cent. in each year respectively. About the middle of July a general meeting of the Palestina Bank sanctioned an increase of its capital by 4,000,000 marks, which the "Handelsvereinigung" has taken over at par, plus 3 per cent. for fees and incidental expenses. Twenty-five per cent. of this increase is to be paid in immediately. It had been intended to alter the name of the bank into "Deutsche, Palestina, und Levante Bank"; this plan has been abandoned, but the very proposal proves that the increase of the capital of the Palestina Bank is connected with the acquisition of the control in the Levante Linie by the "Handelsvereinigung." This connection is further proven by the fact that Ernst Hofmann, the manager of the "Handelsvereinigung," has received a seat on the Board of the Palestina Bank. The commercial enterprise of the Palestina Bank is henceforth to be extended to the Balkan Peninsula, to the Black Sea, and the Persian Gulf. I am, however, confidentially informed by a trustworthy authority that as far as Persia is concerned there exists a secret understanding that all competition with any other German bank there is to be avoided. The other bank referred to is the Orient Bank, and the reason of the secret understanding will be found in what follows:—

The Deutsche Orient Bank (which paid 4 per cent. in 1906) is a foundation chiefly of the Dresdner Bank, with, so far, only branches in Berlin, Hamburg, Constantinople, Brusa, Alexandria, and Cairo. It transpired some time ago that the Dresdner Bank had ridded itself of a considerable part of its interest in the Orient Bank, and it is thought that these interests were acquired by Prince Christian Kraft, through a middleman, in whose name these interests have remained standing. Much secrecy was and is still maintained concerning this transaction. As your Excellency is aware, the Orient Bank (through Mr. Gutmann of the Dresdner Bank) in July 1907 obtained a Concession for a German bank in Persia, where, according to the above list, the Orient Bank had so far no branch office. The Concession for this new branch expires at the end of 1909, but so far no financial operations have been started because under present circumstances the risks seemed too great. I have, however, been confidentially informed by a generally trustworthy authority that, under pressure from the German Foreign Office, the Orient Bank has reluctantly consented to start its operations on the 1st October next, unless some startling political developments justify a further delay.

The fact that Prince Christian Kraft owns great financial interests in the Orient Bank, and that Prince Friedrich Carl, who controls the Palestina Bank, works with capital advanced by his brother, explains the secret understanding above referred to which is said to exist between the two banks. In fact, in the inner circle of German finance a somewhat premature rumour is current that the Orient Bank and the Palestina Bank intend to combine—a course which would not be at all unnatural in view of the above, and in view also of the difficulties so far experienced by the Orient Bank in its Turkish enterprises.

Your Excellency is undoubtedly aware that, after a keen competition which lasted many years, a combination was achieved about ten years ago for financial operations in Turkey between the Deutsche Bank and the Banque Ottomane. The chief financial transactions in Turkey are carried out by this combination, under the control of the "Dette Publique." Nevertheless the Orient Bank has gained a certain footing in Turkey for financial transactions which do not concern the Public Imperial Exchequer, e.g., local loans or advances to the Sultan's purse. Its successes are said to have been achieved by exaggerated financial concessions which have so thoroughly incurred the displeasure of the older established group of the Deutsche Bank that the extreme riskiness of some of its advances are jeered at by the older and sounder competitor. It is certainly an open secret that the transactions of the Orient Bank in Turkey have so far been anything but financially successful. There are many people in Germany who hold that the Dresdner Bank in some of its financial transactions abroad has been too speculative, and that it has not always shown the discretion which ought to be exercised by a bank of its standing. The past transactions of the Orient Bank above referred to certainly seem to justify such a belief. It is, on the other hand, pointed out that without vast financial concessions the Orient Bank could have obtained no footing at all in Turkey, and that eventually it will endeavour to force itself by hook or by crook into the older established working arrangement Deutsche Bank-Banque Ottomane. Such a lofty, if, as some think,

undignified, policy seems more in keeping with the methods of Prince Friedrich Carl rather than with those of Prince Christian Kraft, the latter of whom is said to be as sound and aristocratic also in finance as the other is unreliable and plobeian. It cannot be foretold which of these two personal influences will ultimately prevail; the secret understanding come to between the Palestina Bank and the Orient Bank, of which the arrangement concerning Persia is probably only a part, precludes in the meantime, I think, any genuine competition between the two concerns, and possibly points already to a final harmonious working of the whole German group of *haute finance* in the Near East.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS OPPENHEIMER.

[28261] No. 313.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received August 14.)

Sir, *Treasury Chambers, August 13, 1908.*
THE Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury have given their serious consideration to Mr. Mallet's letter of the 11th instant further respecting the acquisition by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the control of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah.

In view of the assurances now given by Secretary Sir E. Grey that the control of this line is of the highest political moment, my Lords will no longer withhold their sanction for the proposal as put forward in Mr. Mallet's letter of the 2nd March last, viz., the charge to the Imperial Exchequer of an initial expenditure not exceeding 650*l.*, and a recurrent expenditure not exceeding 300*l.* a-year, being one-half of the cost involved in taking over and maintaining the line.

I am, &c.
(Signed) G. H. MURRAY.

[27472] No. 314.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 14, 1908.*
I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, on the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, he caused a communication to be addressed to Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. (Limited), pointing out the unsatisfactory nature of the guarantee offered by them in connection with their proposed application for a Concession to extract red oxide from the mines on the Island of Siri, and inviting them to amend it in the sense desired by Viscount Morley.

I am now to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the Company, amending and amplifying their former guarantee,^o and to inquire whether the terms of this document, taken in conjunction with the former undertaking, appear to Lord Morley satisfactory.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23059] No. 315.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 14, 1908.*
I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, relative to the proceedings of the agent of the Mouin-ut-Tajjar in connexion with the construction of a shed by your Company at Shellilie, in which you request that a telegram may be addressed to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, instructing him to put pressure on the Persian Government to prevent further interference with the work.

You are aware, from my letter of the 10th ultimo, of the steps which Mr. Marling, on instructions from Sir E. Grey, has already taken on the Company's behalf with regard to this matter, and of his assurance as to his action in the future for the settlement of the question.

It is clear from Mr. Marling's report that he will spare no effort to further the Company's interests, and I am accordingly to inform you that, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, no useful purpose would be served by furnishing him with further instructions on the subject by telegraph.

A copy of your letter will, however, be forwarded to him in due course.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28372] No. 316.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 15.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosure in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 23rd July, relative to the use of British and German flags in the Persian Gulf.

India Office, August 14, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 316.

Captain Trevor to Government of India.

(No. 506.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bushire, July 15, 1908.

PLEASE refer to the third paragraph of the Resident's letter.

The other day Abdulla-bin-Hassan din Samayeh acquired two more boats. I am inquiring what flags he flies on them. Pending the result of the inquiry, please suspend action.

[28317] No. 317.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 15.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 14th instant, relative to the insubordination of the Consular guard at Ispahan.

India Office, August 14, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 317.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 14, 1908.

WE have received following telegram from Tehran, dated the 10th instant:—

"Report received from Acting Consul-General, Ispahan, states that conduct verging on mutiny is being shown by his escort. Lieutenant Ranking, who is for the time at Ispahan, and who was asked by me to take charge of escort while there, confirms this report. The facts are as follows:—

"After the present rations allowance, based on current prices, was ordered, the escort at Ispahan by some error continued to receive 2 krans a-day. When Graham arrived at Ispahan, he referred the question to the Military Attaché, whose answer was that the scale laid down should be enforced. Result of enforcement was that,

with exception of the two non-commissioned officers, the whole escort [? refused] their rations allowance. Lieutenant Ranking reports that the men were very restless and might get insubordinate if the question were not quickly disposed of, and that further combined action on the part of men was probable."

His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, adds that he is of opinion that it is necessary to make an example; and he inquires whether arrangements cannot be made to relieve present escort and send fresh escort under a native officer. In anticipation of your sanction we are taking steps to send out a relieving detachment commanded by a native officer.

[28261]

No. 318.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 15, 1908.

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 11th instant, relative to the question of the acquisition by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the control of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the Treasury,* conveying the assent of the Lords Commissioners to the charge to Imperial funds by one half of the expenditure involved in this transaction.

I am to state at the same time that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive, with as little delay as may be convenient, in view of the urgency of the case, an expression of Viscount Morley's wishes with regard to the question asked in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 241 of the 24th ultimo, copy of which formed the inclosure in my letter of the 29th ultimo, as to the possibility of furnishing the Indo-European Telegraph Department at Tehran with full powers to negotiate with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28420]

No. 319.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 135.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, August 16, 1908.

PERSIAN railways.

I have received Memorandum from Minister for Foreign Affairs in reply to British proposals.

Russian Government agree in principle to a line from Julfa to Mohammerah, and are prepared to enter into exchange of views as to practical details, and also would be ready to free Persian Government from obligation to abstain from giving Concessions before 1910. Russian Government, being unable to furnish capital themselves, would be ready to settle financial side of question with the assistance of Great Britain.

Russian Government further consider that, in view of the financial difficulties of the Shah, question of an important external loan is intimately connected with that of Railway Concession, and that two questions should be arranged simultaneously.

Russian Government would propose to join the line with Tehran and also to link up Tehran with Resht and Enzeli. Furthermore, necessity of constructing a line from Askani to Meshed must be considered. In order to preserve Russian commercial interests in the north it will be probably necessary to examine question of freight rates on Mohammerah line.

Memorandum incloses copy of letter addressed by Sir H. Drummond-Wolff to former Russian Minister on the 20th January, 1900, regarding railways in Persia, which might be taken as a basis for an interchange of views.

[28403]

No. 320.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 223.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Therapia, August 16, 1908.

MR. WRATISLAW telegraphs as follows from Urumia, No. 49 of the 11th instant:—

"Yaver Pasha has entered the district of Baranduz, accompanied by some Kurds and two companies of Turkish soldiers; and the population have been ordered by him to pay no more taxes to the Persian Government.

"The Persian Commissioner has addressed a remonstrance to Taher Pasha. The latter answers that the troops were sent there by him for the purpose of maintaining order, but also contends that the whole of Anzel, as well as the western part of Baranduz, is Turkish territory. He further asserted his right to dispatch troops to any of the frontier districts now in dispute between Turkey and Persia.

"I have to report the arrival here of an Inspector of the Ottoman Public Debt, ostensibly for the purpose of buying salt for the Van Vilayet, but really in order that, as soon as Anzel is occupied definitely, a salt administration may be established on the shore of the lake there.

"The Persian Commissioner is entirely at a loss as to what to do, as seven weeks have passed since he last received any communication from Tehran."

[28435]

No. 321.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 193.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 1, 1908.

THE proposals which the Financial Adviser laid before the Russian Minister and myself on the 26th and again on the 27th ultimo, after he had had a somewhat more detailed discussion with the Minister of Finance, have not yet taken a very definite shape, but I venture to think that a general outline of them may be of interest.

M. Bizot particularly insists on the necessity of increasing the authority of the Minister of Finance, which at present is almost nil. Under the existing system the Minister of Finance has little or no control over any of the revenue receipts, with the exception of the Customs, the others being nominally encashed by an independent Treasurer, who is apparently never called on to give an account of the moneys that are paid into his keeping. The latter functionary, again, appears to have the power to call on the provincial authorities to pay up the revenues for the collection of which they are responsible, this duty being nominally incumbent on the "Mustaulis." The "Mustaulis" are supposed to keep the Government accounts by a complicated system peculiar to themselves, and part of their duty is to adjust the financial dealings of the Central Government with the local authorities. For this purpose a "Mustauli" resides in each provincial capital, and corresponds with one of the fraternity in Tehran specially detailed to deal with the money affairs of that province. They appear to be thoroughly corrupt, but so long as they furnish some kind of account—which no one can verify or even understand but themselves—of the funds they are supposed to encash, no questions are asked; indeed, no one would appear to have the power to do so except those who are interested in keeping the veil drawn over their proceedings.

M. Bizot desires to sweep away Treasurer and "Mustaulis" alike, and to appoint a small Committee of Control, nominally subordinate to the Minister of Finance, but really created for the purpose of controlling his actions. This Committee would, in fact, be an advisory body without whose assent the Minister could take no action. As regards the organization of the Ministry, M. Bizot is in favour of the simplest scheme possible, as anything at all complicated would leave the door open to the trickery and embezzlement so dear to the Persian official mind. The revenues of Persia are very simple, being practically confined to the "Maliat" and the Customs, though there are a few other minor sources. The amount of the "Maliat" for each province is known, and could be used as a working basis to begin with, though later on it might be readjusted so as to secure the considerably larger revenues which it is believed should be obtained. There would seem, therefore, to be but little difficulty in forming a revenue branch, provided an honest official can be secured to preside over it. On the expenditure side, however, more building up will be required. Hitherto there

[1599]

has been no such thing as a Budget—the Persian mind seems to be incapable of grasping such an idea. M. Bizot has tried to explain it, but without success. The officials at the Ministry of Finance admit that expenditure and revenue should be made to balance, but they ask how can this be done when the customs revenue is an uncertain figure. The customs receipts, they argue, must therefore be left out of the Budget, and the ordinary expenditure cut down to the known amount of the "Maliat" and the other fixed sources of revenue. It seems that this has actually been done of late, and that the surplus customs receipts, after payment of the charges on them, have been looked upon as an extraordinary fund whence all sorts of unforeseen and unauthorized expenditure could be met. M. Bizot, however, believes that it will be possible to draw up expenditure estimates sufficiently accurate to form a provisional Budget. He also proposes that the Customs and the Mint should be subordinate to the Ministry of Finance.

It is evident, however, that the success of his scheme, as he admits himself, depends entirely on the composition and powers of the Committee of Control. M. Bizot believes that he can name two or three honest and capable Persians who could be placed on it. I myself feel some doubt whether any Persians could be found of sufficient strength of character, even with a "Medjliss" to support them, to withstand pressure from the Shah or his entourage, and of course there is always the possibility to be guarded against that the honest may be dismissed and replaced by more subservient men.

A European element in the contemplated Committee seems therefore indispensable to give it the necessary stiffening to secure honest administration. How to secure this is M. Bizot's chief difficulty. He understands that neither Great Britain nor Russia desire to employ their own subjects, which might produce an appearance of joint control, and he would like, if possible, to appoint Europeans already in the service of the Persian Government, such as M. Kornard, the Administrator of Customs, or possibly M. Wibier, who is also in the Customs, but whose reputation, perhaps not wholly deserved, for being always ready to serve the interests of one foreign Legation or another rather disposes M. Bizot against him.

But even presuming that a satisfactory Committee could be formed with proper security for its permanence, there still remains the difficult question of where to find the personnel requisite to organize a reasonably efficient Finance Department. Personally, I am convinced that it will be an almost impossible task, unless a certain number of the more responsible officials are Europeans. I think that, on the whole, M. Bizot is of the same way of thinking.

M. Bizot was received in audience by the Shah on the 30th, and gave His Imperial Majesty an outline of the reforms which he proposed. The Shah raised no objections whatever, but rather professed the greatest readiness to give his assistance, especially for the formation of the Committee of Control. It is, however, impossible to say what value can be attached to His Majesty's promises. At present they may be sincere enough, as it has been impressed on him that on his acceptance of an effective scheme of reform depends the possibility of obtaining money to carry on the Government. M. Bizot was careful to explain to His Majesty that he had not come to offer an advance from the two Governments, but rather to explain that they would not even take into consideration the question of assisting Persia in her present financial embarrassment, except on a definite pledge that the work of reform would be seriously taken in hand. M. de Hartwig believes that the Shah realizes this perfectly well.

As regards the courtiers and Ministers, it is very probable that they are ready to advise His Majesty to accept any and every condition that may be attached by the two Powers to a joint advance should they agree to make one, but this complaisant attitude is probably due to the hope that they will be able to lay hands on the money, and I expect that when it is discovered that it is strictly tied up and beyond their reach they will, with few exceptions, throw every obstacle in the way of the reforms being accepted and executed.

There can be no question but that money is urgently needed; yet while the Persian Government has been driven to the most desperate resorts to obtain it, as for instance, by anticipating the customs receipts, by "squeezing" the wealthy men who figured in the Constitutional party, or by borrowing at ruinous interest from the bazaars, no attempt is made to secure the rights of the State in the most obvious transactions. To quote an instance, I may mention that the Mint is coining all silver that is offered to it, but the very considerable profits—probably 10 per cent.—go, not to the Government, but to the Director of the Mint, who gives no account of his stewardship. No one, indeed, knows whether the Mint or the telegraph service is carried on *en régie* or *en*

affermage, and only one thing is certain, namely, that the State is being defrauded. This lamentable chaos is due partly to the Shah's incapacity and weakness, and partly to the intrigues of his entourage, who, uncertain how long the present régime will last, desire to make the most of their opportunities.

So bad is the credit of the Government that both the English and Russian Banks—the latter on the express order of the Russian Minister—have absolutely declined to allow the most trifling temporary accommodation even on the security of the customs. Notwithstanding this, some of the Shah's advisers, and in particular Mushir-ed-Dowleh, are assuring His Majesty that money can easily be borrowed, and it is not impossible that, should Great Britain and Russia refuse to come to his assistance, the Shah may be tempted to seek accommodation abroad, giving as security the unassigned surplus of the customs revenues. Commercially speaking, of course, such an operation is almost impossible, but as a speculation some minor banking house or Syndicate might be found to advance a small sum, trusting to the influence of its Government to obtain repayment, and of course a Government interested in obtaining the right to interfere in Persian affairs might be happy to avail itself of the pretext.

To preclude such a possibility, small as I feel it is, but still more to commence the work of reform, in the interests of which the appointment of a Financial Adviser was so warmly urged by us on the Persian Government, I venture to think that it is worthy of consideration whether the two Powers should not agree to make a joint advance to Persia. Reform will not be accepted, I fear, for its own sake, but merely as the only terms on which money can be obtained, and we must also be prepared to see that, as soon as the money is available, every effort to squander it and evade reform will be made. The most stringent guarantees will be necessary if any useful end is to be achieved, and it will be M. Bizot's task to devise the necessary conditions. He is now engaged in ascertaining what would be the minimum amount of the advance required to tide the Government over its present difficulties, and, further, how best to secure that it is not diverted from its legitimate objects. He would then communicate his proposals to M. de Hartwig and myself for submission to our Governments, and, on learning that they are not opposed in principle to granting an advance, would submit a scheme for the reorganization of the Finance Department, on the acceptance of which the advance would be made to depend.

The advance would presumably imply a subsequent loan, but M. Bizot seems at present inclined to think that such a loan would not be of a very large amount, and that the revenues of the country, honestly administered, should prove sufficient for the purposes of the Government. He is, however, naturally unable to commit himself to any very definite statement of opinion until he has had the opportunity of examining the financial position in greater detail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[28436]

No. 322.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 194.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 1, 1908.

I HAVE reported in my telegrams briefly the difficulty which I have encountered in inducing a certain number of the bastis in the Legation to take their departure even after I had received the Shah's Rescript guaranteeing their lives and property. The few who left earlier were not properly bastis, but persons who had come to the Legation on innocent business while the Cossacks were posted around it, and had declined to quit its shelter from fear of being arrested; they left a day or two after the guards were withdrawn.

As soon as I received the Rescript it was read by Mr. Smart to the bastis, and the great majority agreed to leave at once; but about twenty began to make difficulties. At first they declined to go on the ground that they could not trust the Shah's word unless they were furnished with a document from the Legation proving that they were among those in whose favour the special Rescript had been issued. There was, of course, some excuse for them, since in spite of the Rescript of general amnesty arrests for purely political reasons had been numerous. I was very reluctant to give any such papers, as the danger of their being misused was obvious; but as there seemed no

other way of inducing the men to go, I at last decided to issue a few to those who in one way or another appear to have compromised themselves dangerously. The paper was carefully worded, and stated merely that the bearer, whose name, occupation, and residence were accurately given, had been among the refugees at the Legation. Before giving it I consulted the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the point, and he agreed that in this form it would be unobjectionable.

The bastis, however, still manifested a great reluctance to leave, and all the persuasion and arguments employed daily, and almost hourly, by Mr. Smart, and also by Meflah-es-Sultaneh and Mr. Churchill, failed to shake their resolution for a day or two. That they were still afraid there can be little doubt, but I became later quite convinced that they were influenced by political motives also. I therefore instructed Mr. Smart to use much more pressing language to them, and even to hint broadly that as the Legation could not permit them to remain for political reasons only, I might find it necessary to use stronger measures to remove them. I venture to hope that I did not exceed my instructions in doing so.

The intimation was finally, though not immediately, successful, and on the 16th there remained only ten bastis in the Legation, viz., the six whom the Shah desired should leave the country, and four others who were to return to their homes in Azerbaijan.

As regards the former, the Shah began by asking that Taki Zadeh should leave Persia for ten years, Beha-ul-Vaizin, the preacher, for five, one newspaper editor for seven, and another for eight years; but as I raised objections to these long terms, which amounted to a serious punishment of deportation, which was not compatible with the terms of the Rescript, giving a general amnesty to all political agitators, and particularly to those in refuge at His Majesty's Legation, these periods were subsequently reduced as follows:—

	Years.
Taki Zadeh	1½
Beha-ul-Vaizin	1½
Mirza Ali Akhbar Khan	1
Sadik-ul-Harem	1
Seyyid Hassan	1

Mozzed-es-Sultaneh left volunarily on the plea of his ill-health, and no term for him was fixed. Four others were to leave for their homes.

I need not trouble you, Sir, with the tedious and irritating negotiations which terminated in the departure for Enzeli of the remaining refugees on the 18th and 19th July in carriages provided by the State. It was necessary to arrange for some money for their travelling and other expenses to be supplied to them by the Shah, which was eventually done.

The refugees showed themselves again extremely unreasonable; they required to be allowed to remain at Tehran for some days to arrange their private affairs, and some of them even asked that the Shah should give them an allowance to live on during their absence from Persia. I naturally declined to listen to any such pretensions, but it was only with the greatest difficulty, and by again hinting that I might deport them forcibly, that their resistance was finally overcome.

I must say, in justice to Taki Zadeh, that throughout his stay at the Legation he earnestly seconded Mr. Smart's endeavours to get the bastis to leave.

The bastis finally left in two parties on the 18th and 19th July, each in charge of a "Mamur" of the Foreign Office, and accompanied by a gholaam of the Legation.

Mr. Smart's assistance throughout has been most valuable, and deserves all praise.

Meflah-es-Sultaneh, K.C.M.G., the head of the English Department of the Foreign Office, acted as a go-between in the negotiations with the Shah, through whom the terms of the apology and Rescript were arranged, and the subsequent negotiations as to the departure from Persia of the remaining refugees were conducted. His assistance was invaluable, as was that of Ala-es-Sultaneh, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who has throughout shown the strongest good sense, and made every endeavour to bring about a speedy settlement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[28681]

No. 323.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 18.)

(No. 363.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, August 15, 1908.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your despatch No. 215 of the 21st ultimo, Mr. O'Beirne addressed a note to the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs regarding the request of the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople for copies of certain documents relating to the Turco-Persian frontier.

I have now the honour to report that a reply has been received stating that the Imperial Government have no objection to the British and Russian Representatives at Constantinople communicating in concert to the Persian Ambassador copies of the three documents relating to the ratifications of the Treaty of Erzeroum, concluded in 1847, between Persia and Turkey, which were inclosed in your despatch under reply.

M. Isvolsky further informs me in his note that instructions in this sense will be sent to the Russian Embassy at Constantinople by the next messenger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[28791]

No. 324.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 18.)

(No. 137.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 18, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute.

M. Isvolsky informs me that he is disturbed at the continued advance beyond the neutral zone made by the Turkish troops. He has sent telegraphic instructions to Count Benckendorff to speak to you on the subject. His Excellency is of opinion that the Ambassadors at Constantinople should be instructed to make some remonstrance, but he does not know if the present moment is favourable for taking this step. From what M. Isvolsky said, I understood that instructions had been sent to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to speak seriously to the Ottoman Government. I imagine, however, that supposing you consider the moment opportune, Russian Government would like us to join them in making a formal representation to the Porte.

[28766]

No. 325.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 18.)

(No. 275.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 18, 1908.

I CONCUR in proposed increase of escort at Bunder Abbas referred to in your telegram No. 206 of the 12th instant.

[28767]

No. 326.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 18.)

(No. 276.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 18, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports that there has been no firing since the 10th instant in the town.

According to news received by M. de Hartwig, 1,300 troops and 100 Cossacks, under Sepahdar and Ain-ed-Dowleh, are now close to the town.

(Following is Secret.)

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs was requested on the 13th instant by the Russian Consul-General to supply him with a sotnia of Cossacks.

[28085]

No. 327.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 18, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, relative to the proposed employment of Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking to assist His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz.

In view of the points raised in the second and third paragraphs of that letter, Sir E. Grey addressed a telegram to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, inquiring whether he considered the proposal that these two officers should tour in Persia, which might involve their departure from main routes, was open to objection on the score of danger during the present condition of affairs in that country.

Sir E. Grey has now received a telegram from Mr. Marling in reply to his inquiry, stating that Captain Lorimer may be relied on to exercise the greatest prudence, but that he is cautioning him to run no risks.

Mr. Marling adds that there is, in his opinion, no objection to the proposed arrangement.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28085]

No. 328.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 18, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 2nd ultimo, relative to the proposed employment of Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking to assist His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith, copy of a letter from the Treasury,* intimating that they have no objection to the charge to Imperial funds of one half of the expenditure involved by this arrangement, but expressing doubts as to whether it is advisable to permit Captain Lorimer to tour off the main routes during the present condition of affairs in Persia.

I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey consulted His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran by telegraph respecting the point raised by the Treasury, and that Mr. Marling has replied that there is, in his opinion, no objection to the proposed arrangement.

I am to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter which Sir E. Grey has accordingly caused to be addressed to the Treasury,† conveying to them the above information.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28817]

No. 329.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 19.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 18th instant, relative to the Ispahan escort.

India Office, August 18, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 329.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 18, 1908.

ACTION taken by you in regard to Ispahan escort, as reported in your telegram of the 14th instant, is approved.

* No. 294.

† No. 327.

[28884]

No. 330.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 139.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 19, 1908.

ACTING Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to me to-day on the subject of Persia, and suggested that it would be well if the Shah were given a joint reminder, telling him that he must convoke the Assembly on the date fixed and fulfil the promises which he had made in his manifesto. M. Tcharykoff was of opinion that to deliver this warning immediately might be premature. He thought, however, that the step might be taken on Mr. Barclay's arrival in Tehran towards the end of September. He added that he had merely mentioned this proposal now in order that you might have the opportunity of considering it. I replied that I would communicate his suggestion to you, and added that I felt certain that you would agree with his view that it would be most unfortunate should any danger arise of the Shah evading the fulfilment of his promises and returning to a reactionary form of government.

Should M. Tcharykoff's proposal meet with your approval, I might request him to draft the terms of the proposed communication, which I would transmit to you for any observations you may have to offer.

[28890]

No. 331.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 232.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 19, 1908.

FOLLOWING sent to St. Petersburg:—

Turco-Persian frontier.

The Porte seem inclined to try and settle the question, but some delay is unavoidable, as there is at present no Minister of War.

The Russian Ambassador yesterday expressed the hope that he would have my support in making formal representations to the Sublime Porte respecting the advance of Turkish troops, for which he had received instructions from his Government.

I am afraid that, if the new Government are not to be given a chance of settling the dispute themselves, formal representations at this moment would be considered as not in conformity with our recent expressions of sympathy with them.

[28791]

No. 332.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 296.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 19, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 18th August, No. 137, on the subject of the frontier dispute between Persia and Turkey.

If the Russian Government desire it we are prepared to send instructions to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to join with his Russian colleague in making representations of a friendly nature to the Sublime Porte.

If Count Benckendorff mentions the question I will inform him of the above.

[28420]

No. 333.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 297.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 19, 1908.

RAILWAYS in Persia.

When the Memorandum referred to in your telegram No. 135 of the 16th instant is received, it will be read with interest. The question cannot, however, be taken into consideration until Ministers return to town in the autumn, when a careful examination will be accorded to it.

[28407]

No. 334.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 209.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 19, 1908.

PERSIAN Minister in London. With reference to your telegram of the 16th August, No. 274.

Two years have now elapsed since the departure of the last Persian Minister from this Court, and a year and a-half since the King accepted Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh as successor to the post.

We hear now that the Shah has withdrawn this nomination, but has not proposed any alternative appointment.

His Majesty's Government expect that no further delay will occur in making a nomination, as they consider the Shah's action discourteous in the last degree.

[28974]

No. 335.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received August 20.)

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Board of Trade, August 19, 1908.

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, in which you inquire as to the constitution and standing of the firm of Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons (Limited), and in particular as to whether it is a British enterprise.

In reply, I am to transmit to you the accompanying Memorandum, which has been prepared in this Department, containing certain information on the subject, and I am to state that, as the result of further inquiries which the Board have caused to be made, they are informed that the firm are very respectable merchants, doing a good business, and good for engagements.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GEO. J. STANLEY.

Inclosure in No. 335.

Memorandum respecting the Firm of Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons.

THE Company was incorporated on the 27th November, 1905, with a nominal capital of 75,000*l.*, and is stated in its Memorandum of Association to have been established to acquire the business of general merchants, carried on at 6, Lloyd's Avenue, London, and 24, Sackville Street, Manchester, under the style of Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons.

A summary of capital which is on the file of the Company shows that on the 2nd August, 1907, shares of the nominal amount of 37,300*l.* had been issued to thirty-five shareholders, in respect of which the Company was stated to have received in cash 35,200*l.* Since that date further shares of the nominal value of 958*l.* have also been allotted for cash.

10,800*l.* of the capital is held by Hussein Agha, of 111, Portland Street, Manchester, and 15,600*l.* of the balance is held by shareholders with foreign names, with addresses in Persia. The amount of capital held by persons with English names is 5,935*l.*

The Directors are:—

Hadji Mirza Ali Asghar, Tehran, Persia, merchant.

Hussein Agha, 111, Portland Street, Manchester, merchant.

Lawrence Whistler, 6, Lloyd's Avenue, London, E.C., merchant.

Agha Reza, 111, Portland Street, Manchester, merchant.

Board of Trade, August 19, 1908.

[28945]

No. 336.

Note communicated by the Russian Embassy, August 20, 1908.

LE Gouvernement Impérial a été informé par le Vice-Consul à Ourmiah de nouveaux empiètements des Turcs sur le territoire Persan dans les régions du Barandus et d'Ansel; Takhir Pacha a même écrit au Délégué Persan qu'une partie du Barandus et que l'Ansel en entier appartiennent à la Turquie. La dernière des deux régions susnommées est limitrophe à celle d'Ourmiah, qui se trouve ainsi séparée de l'Aserbaïdjan.

Quoique, en raison de la situation actuelle en Turquie, une intervention catégorique de la Russie et de l'Angleterre pour la défense des droits du Gouvernement Persan ne saurait paraître opportune, le Gouvernement Impérial considère cependant qu'il n'est pas à souhaiter que les empiètements en question demeurent sans provoquer de protestations.

D'autre part, d'après des renseignements parvenus d'Asie Mineure, l'exemplaire Turc de la carte identique de la zone en litige sur la frontière Turco-Persane, remis à la Porte en 1869 par les Ambassadeurs de Russie et de Grande-Bretagne, aurait été égaré par un haut fonctionnaire de la Cour Ottomane; les Turcs se guideraient en conséquence uniquement par la carte de Dervish Pacha (en 1848), qui, ayant été dressée par ce fonctionnaire sans aucun autre concours, ne saurait avoir de valeur ni pour le Gouvernement Persan, ni pour les deux Puissances Médiatrices.

Dans ces conditions le Gouvernement considérerait utile que les Ambassadeurs de Russie et d'Angleterre adressassent à la Porte des protestations en termes identiques contre les empiètements nouveaux dépassant les limites de la zone en litige, telle que celle-ci a été établie par la carte en question; en même temps, au cas où les renseignements parvenus à Saint-Petersbourg concernant la perte de la carte se trouveraient être exacts, il y aurait lieu de proposer à la Porte de lui en procurer une nouvelle copie.

[29014]

No. 337.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 233.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 20, 1908.

FOLLOWING sent to St. Petersburg:—

"I have been informed by the Grand Vizier that he has decided to come to a friendly settlement of the Turco-Persian frontier question with the Persians, and he is consequently sending instructions for the Turkish troops to be withdrawn from all places which are incontestably in Persian territory, on the east side of the zone.

"The assurances given by Kiamil Pasha appear to satisfy Prince Mirza Ali Riza Khan."

[28884]

No. 338.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 299.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 20, 1908.

PERSIAN affairs.

The suggestion contained in your telegram No. 139 of the 19th instant has my concurrence. You are authorized to invite the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs to draw up the joint communication to the Shah on the lines indicated.

[28890]

No. 339.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 162.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 20, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I agree with the view expressed in your telegram of the 19th August, No. 232, that it would be undesirable to make a formal representation to the Porte, but

[1599]

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see no objection to putting before the Turkish Government a clear statement of the actual facts. It is probable that they are unaware of them, and the manner in which the *status quo* has been violated by the Turks should therefore be explained to them.

It would also be desirable that your Excellency and your Russian colleague should make clear the special position occupied by the two Powers in relation to this particular frontier, by reason of which they are compelled, in response to repeated appeals from the Persian Government, to approach the Porte.

The representations which the two Powers have repeatedly made up till now have remained without effect, but they entertain the conviction that, on learning the true state of affairs, the present Turkish Government will lose no time in taking steps to remedy the situation.

In making this communication you should be careful to invest it with the friendliest possible character.

[29074]

No. 340.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 19, 1908.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 10th instant, inclosing copy of a despatch in which His Majesty's Charge d'Affaires at Tehran comments on the recent confiscation and sale by the Persian Customs authorities of a Bahreini dhow, on account of a slight breach of the Customs Regulations, as a further instance of the harsh treatment of Bahreinis by the Persian authorities.

In reply, I am to say that Viscount Morley adheres to the views expressed in the letter of this Department dated the 13th May last, and concurs in the opinion of Sir E. Grey that it is desirable to await the result of Mr. Marling's further representations to the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs, as to the non-receipt of the amended note promised by him regarding Bahrein, before deciding what more drastic measures should be taken in the matter of the protection of Bahreinis by His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[29068]

No. 341.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 19, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 31st ultimo, as to the capture and punishment of the men known to have been concerned in the Taona murders, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, copy of telegraphic correspondence with the Government of India on the subject.

Lord Morley concurs in the terms of the instructions which Sir E. Grey has proposed to issue to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran. It would be convenient if the telegram sent to him were marked for repetition to the Government of India.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 341.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 1, 1908.

CERTAIN recommendations, in accordance with suggestions from Resident in Gulf, have been made by Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran for the capture and punishment of Taona murderers. It is considered that instructions to following effect might be sent to Chargé d'Affaires:—

"Suggestions by His Majesty's Consul-General, Bushire, for effecting the capture of culprits are approved, but from point of view of international law there are difficulties in sending them, as you propose, to India for trial. Best course to follow, having regard to the improbability of punishment or compensation being obtained through trial in Persian Court, would be to send the men for trial and punishment to Abu Thabi, and to detain them until the Chief of Taona has paid compensation for families of victims. Arrangements might be made, should this course be impracticable, for the detention of offenders at Abu Thabi till we obtain a satisfactory undertaking that on their return to Persian soil they will be properly tried and punished. His Majesty's Consul-General, Bushire, should be instructed by you to adopt whichever he thinks preferable of these alternative courses."

I shall be glad to have your views on these suggested instructions without delay.

Inclosure 2 in No. 341.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 11, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 1st August, as to Taona murders, we have to state that no information as to suggestions made to Marling by Cox has reached us beyond what is contained in Marling's telegraphic reference to No. 220, Foreign Office, of the 15th ultimo. We do not, however, see any objection to the instructions it is proposed to issue.

[29076]

No. 342.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 19, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 14th instant, as to the guarantee offered by Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co., in connection with their proposed application for a concession to extract red oxide from the mines on the Island of Sirri, I am directed to say that the terms of the Company's letter of the 6th instant appear to the Secretary of State for India to be satisfactory, taken in conjunction with the statement in their earlier letter that the concession will be controlled in British interests.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[29123]

No. 343.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 20, 1908.

IN reply to your letters dated the 29th ultimo and 15th instant, as to the proposal to obtain from the Persian Government the control by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley sees no objection to authority being given to the Indo-European Telegraph Department at Tehran to enter into negotiations, subject to final sanction, with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs in the matter, on the understanding that in no event will more than a moiety of the cost involved be defrayed from Indian revenues.

Copy of a Memorandum by the Director-in-chief is inclosed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 343.

Memorandum by Mr. Kirk.

OWING to the bad working of the Borasjun-Ahwaz line, the Persian Minister of Telegraphs has hinted to the Director of Telegraphs of this Department at Tehran that the Department might undertake its repair. He does not appear to have said anything with regard to defraying the cost of the repair. Mr. Marling suggests that the opportunity might be taken to negotiate for obtaining the control of the line even up to Mohammerah. I think that we should most certainly include the whole line from Borasjun to Mohammerah in any arrangement of control that may be arrived at.

If authority is given me to tell the Director at Tehran to approach the Persian Minister of Telegraphs on the subject of the Department repairing the whole line, the negotiations might be opened by his asking the Telegraph Minister (1) what lump sum he would be prepared to give for the purpose of putting the line in order; (2) what annual contribution he would be willing to make towards the upkeep of the line; and (3) for what length of time he would be prepared to agree that the control of the line should remain in our hands. The less that the Persian Minister would be prepared to do under (1) and (2), the more could be asked for under (3). As it is the control of the line for an extended period that is wanted, action in the way I have indicated to commence with may perhaps prove as effective as any other. The Persian Minister is well aware, if the line was repaired by the Department and no further control kept of it by the Department, that in a short time it would be in as bad a condition as it is in at present. He knows any expenditure on the line without the subsequent control by the Department would be a waste of money. The present Minister is a man who is favourable to the British, and the relations between him and the Department have always been most friendly. The time seems to be favourable for carrying out Mr. Marling's proposal.

(Signed) H. A. KIRK.

August 4, 1908.

[29122]

No. 344.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 20, 1908.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to inclose, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Government of India as to the conduct of the Consular escort at Ispahan, together with a copy of his reply, confirming the action taken by the Government of India with regard to the sending of a relieving detachment. Some extra expenditure will be involved in this, but it is not possible to calculate the amount on the information at present received from India. It may be assumed that the conduct of the escort will be fully investigated by the military authorities.

Viscount Morley trusts that the terms of the reply sent to the Government of India will be concurred in by Sir E. Grey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 344.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 14, 1908.

WE have received following telegram from Tehran, dated the 10th instant:—

"Report received from Acting Consul-General, Ispahan, states that conduct verging on mutiny is being shown by his escort. Lieutenant Ranking, who is for the time at Ispahan, and who was asked by me to take charge of escort while there, confirms this report. The facts are as follows:—

"After the present rations allowance, based on current prices, was ordered, the escort at Ispahan by some error continued to receive 2 kraus a-day. When Graham

arrived at Ispahan he referred the question to the Military Attaché, whose answer was that the scale laid down should be enforced. Result of enforcement was that, with exception of the two non-commissioned officers, the whole escort [? refused] their rations allowance. Lieutenant Ranking reports that the men were very restless and might get insubordinate if the question were not quickly disposed of, and that further combined action on the part of men was probable."

His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, adds that he is of opinion that it is necessary to make an example, and he inquires whether arrangements cannot be made to relieve present escort and send fresh escort under a native officer. In anticipation of your sanction we are taking steps to send out a relieving detachment commanded by a native officer.

Inclosure 2 in No. 344.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 18, 1908.

ACTION taken by you in regard to Ispahan, as reported in your telegram of the 14th instant, is approved.

[29081]

No. 345.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

War Office, August 20, 1908.

I AM commanded by the Army Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 17th ultimo, relating to the question of whether the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed should be maintained or abolished, and requesting that the opinion of the Army Council upon the subject, from the point of view of Imperial military interests, might be given.

In reply, my Council command me to say that they are in favour of the appointment of Military Attaché at Meshed being maintained, as the presence of a British officer there in that capacity is so useful as to counter-balance the objection to that of a Russian officer in Seistan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) R. H. BRADE.

[29014]

No. 346.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 306.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

You should communicate to Russian Government the substance of my telegram No. 166 to Constantinople of the 21st instant, and ask them to give their assent to the course of action indicated.

[28949]

No. 347.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 309.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

IN view of the circumstances reported in the Government of India's telegram of the 19th August, repeated to you, and of Minister for Foreign Affairs' admission that a raid has been made by Jamshedis from Russian into Afghan territory, and that they have since been allowed to return into Russia, makes it look as if there may have been

[1599]

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some provocation of Afghans from Russian territory, and as if the attitude of Russian local authorities towards Afghans had not been very friendly.

We are again pressing the Ameer for a reply, but your Excellency should point out the above to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, making it clear, however, that it is not founded upon anything we have heard from the Ameer.

[29014]

No. 348.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 166.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 233 of the 20th instant respecting the frontier dispute between Persia and Turkey, you may, in view of the assurances given by the Grand Vizier, and of the attitude adopted by the Persian Ambassador, defer taking action indicated in my telegram No. 162 of the 20th instant until you receive further instructions.

The Russian Government are being asked to act in a similar manner.

[26168]

No. 349.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 218.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

TAONA murders.

With reference to your telegram No. 250 of the 27th ultimo, the suggestions for effecting the capture of the murderers made by Consul-General at Bushire have my approval, but from the point of view of international law there are difficulties in the way of sending them for trial to India, as proposed by you.

As it appears to be improbable that we should obtain punishment or compensation as the result of a trial in a Persian Court, the culprits had better be sent to Abu Thabi to be tried and punished. They can be detained at that place until the Chief of Taona pays compensation for the families of the victims. Should this course prove impracticable the men might be detained at Abu Thabi until satisfactory guarantees are given that, on their return to Persian territory, they will be duly tried and punished.

Whichever of these two alternatives is considered preferable by Consul-General at Bushire should be adopted. Please instruct him accordingly.

[28945]

No. 350.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Sevastopoulo.

HIS Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, and has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the communication handed to Mr. Mallet on the 19th instant, relative to the renewed encroachments by Turks on the Persian frontier, which have passed beyond the limits of the disputed zone.

Sir E. Grey has the honour to inform M. Sevastopoulo in reply that His Majesty's Government share the anxiety felt by the Russian Government with respect to these proceedings and concur in the opinion that, although, in view of the present situation in Turkey, a categorical intervention on the part of the two Powers in defence of the rights of the Persian Government would be inopportune, yet an identic representation to the Sublime Porte by their two Representatives at Constantinople is desirable.

Sir E. Grey has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a telegram addressed to His Majesty's Ambassador at that capital,* conveying to his Excellency the necessary instructions in this sense, and to express the hope that the Russian Government may see their way to furnish their Representative with similar instructions.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

[29014]

No. 351.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Sévastopoulo.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 21, 1908.

WITH reference to my note of to-day, relative to the situation on the Turco-Persian frontier, I have the honour to inform you that I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that the Grand Vizier has stated to him that he is resolved to arrive at an amicable settlement of the difficulty with the Persian Government, and that instructions are being dispatched for the withdrawal of all Ottoman troops from places lying to the east of the disputed zone which incontestably form part of Persian territory.

Sir G. Lowther adds that the assurances given by his Highness appear to be satisfactory to the Persian Ambassador.

I have the honour to inform you that, in view of the information contained in this telegram, it appears to His Majesty's Government unnecessary to proceed at once to the contemplated joint representation to the Sublime Porte on this subject, and I have accordingly telegraphed to Sir G. Lowther, instructing him to abstain from this step pending the receipt of a further communication.

I have also telegraphed to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, instructing him to inform the Russian Government of the views of His Majesty's Government, and of the action taken, and to invite their concurrence and the dispatch to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople of instructions similar to those sent to Sir G. Lowther.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[29233]

No. 352.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 142.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1908.

I HAVE received your telegrams Nos. 305 and 306, and I have the honour to report that the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs quite agrees that the Representatives at Constantinople should defer taking any action as regards the Turco-Persian frontier question. M. Tcharykoff said that as regards the Grand Vizier's assurances, he had received no information. He added, however, that the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires had that morning spoken to him on this point, saying that his Government would withdraw their troops, and that they were most desirous, with the friendly mediation of the British and Russian Governments, of arriving at a final and amicable settlement of the frontier question. It was most desirable, according to the Chargé d'Affaires, that no differences should exist between the two Mussulman Powers and that they should be on the best of terms. M. Tcharykoff replied in the negative to my inquiry as to whether the Chargé d'Affaires had been speaking under instructions, but he thought that the views of the Turkish Government were probably represented in his utterances.

An identic communication might now, in M. Tcharykoff's opinion, be addressed to the Shah by the British and Russian Representatives, pointing out the new and satisfactory departure which had been made by the Ottoman Government, and explaining that the constant efforts of the British and Russian Governments were responsible for this favourable change. I requested M. Tcharykoff to embody his ideas in a Memorandum which I could submit for your consideration. At the same time I dwelled on the necessity of his being careful not to go further than the Turkish Government were prepared to go in this direction, as it would be unfortunate if hopes were raised and then not realized. In conclusion his Excellency promised to furnish me with the Memorandum which I had suggested he should draw up.

[29234]

No. 353.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 143.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1908.

SITUATION in Persia. Your telegram No. 299 of the 20th instant.

M. Tcharykoff informs me that he will draw up a communication to be made to the Shah by the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran should the necessity arise. In reply I made the suggestion that perhaps, after the British and Russian Governments had agreed on the terms of this communication, the two Representatives at Tehran might consult as to an opportune moment for its presentation to the Shah, if it should prove necessary to take this step.

[29123]

No. 354.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 219.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 22, 1908.

AHWAZ-BORASJUN telegraph line.

With reference to your telegram No. 244 of the 24th ultimo.

Acquisitions by Indo-European Telegraph Department of control of line has been agreed to by the Treasury, the cost to be divided with the Government of India.

Subject to final sanction, and an understanding that not more than half cost will fall on Indian funds, the India Office have no objection to Department at Tehran negotiating the matter with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs. They have been asked to send instructions accordingly.

[29267]

No. 355.

Sir K. Lascelles to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 24.)

(No. 183. Commercial.)

Sir,

Berlin, August 20, 1908.

THE Persian correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt," M. Edward Mygind, contributes a letter on English activity and trade in Arabistan, dated from Ahwaz at the end of June.

He states that Messrs. Lynch, notwithstanding the difficulties they experienced with the Bakhtiari, have entered into negotiation with the Lurs for the construction of a road in connection with the steam navigation of the Karun to the north via Shuster, Dizful, Khoremsabad, and thence towards Tehran.

In the negotiations, says M. Mygind, Messrs. Lynch counted on the enmity between the Lurs and the Bakhtiari, but all their efforts to obtain the consent of the former to the construction of the road were in vain. An attempt to gain over the Lurs by Captain Lorimer, His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz, was made in June last, but this also was unavailing. The German correspondent states that Captain Lorimer told him that he was simply going on leave to the hills, but when Mygind tried to accompany him on the steamer Captain Lorimer caused him to be told that all the places were taken, and was otherwise very disobliging. This aroused M. Mygind's suspicions, and he started inquiries which proved to him that the object of Captain Lorimer's journey was to negotiate with the Lurs, that these negotiations had failed, and that the English were very anxious to keep the matter quiet and to prevent the German correspondent getting wind of it.

The correspondent then goes on to describe the commercial resources of the province, and states that when he was at Ahwaz the resident English expressed contempt at German trade competition in the Gulf. M. Mygind confesses himself much annoyed at this, especially in view of the fact that he was unable to controvert it. The facts according to him are as follows:—

The Hamburg-America Line has established a monthly steamer service to the Gulf. Their agents are Messrs. Wöckhaus and Co., who have branches at Bushire, Lingah, and Bussorah. They have nominated as their representative at Mohammerah Sheikh Hadj Ali Reis, who possesses an unenviable notoriety as the chief of the

smuggling business throughout the Gulf. This man has been repudiated by the English and Russian Companies. The German firm found themselves obliged to appoint him, for there is no European business house in Mohammerah, and the Sheikh is the only person there of financial stability who is conversant with the conditions of European trade, and it is said that he represents the interests of the Company with considerable skill. It would, however, be worthy of consideration whether Hadj Ali should not be considered as temporary agent only, and that the Company should not appoint an agent of their own at Mohammerah. The simplest way would be for the Company to get the firm to establish a launch service, with a dépôt at Mohammerah, to transport their goods between that place and Bussorah; it would then be possible to transform that service into a regular passenger and freight service, for which there is considerable demand. German initiative is not likely to find much opposition in those regions, owing to the general suspicion with which England is regarded there. Quite apart from politics, every one is tired of the tyranny of Messrs. Lynch, who have established a monopoly in the Gulf. Recently a Dutch firm was obliged to request the intervention of the British Legation to compel Messrs. Lynch to transport their corn to Mohammerah, where it was to be shipped on board a sea-going vessel, and the Legation informed Messrs. Lynch that they were a Company to whom the British Government paid a subvention, and that they therefore could not be allowed to indulge their private opinions and jealousies.

I have, &c.
(For Sir F. Lascelles),
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

[29449]

No. 356.

Note communicated by French Embassy, August 24, 1908.

LE Ministre de Russie à Téhéran a entretenu le Ministre de France de la nécessité d'établir une Banque Nationale. Celle-ci serait créée avec des capitaux Anglais et Russes et fonctionnerait sous une sorte de tutelle de fait exercée par la Banque de Prêts Russe et l'"Imperial Bank." Le Ministre de France verrait de grands avantages à la création de cette banque, qui pourrait jouer utilement et avec de sérieuses garanties le rôle d'une Trésorerie d'État, dont le besoin est urgent et dont la lenteur des réformes financières ne permet pas d'espérer le prochain fonctionnement. M. Rabino accepterait la présidence de cette banque.

Le Gouvernement Anglais a sans doute été saisi de ce projet. Le Gouvernement Français désirerait savoir s'il y est ou non favorable.

Le 24 Août, 1908.

[29447]

No. 357.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 24.)

(No. 277.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 24, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul for Arabistan sent the following telegram yesterday from Ispahan:—

"I found on my return here that Lynch, Ahwaz, has furnished Ranking with the sum of 180*l.* as a rough estimate for the repair of the bridge; 1,000 tomans had then been stated by Ranking to the Khans as the amount of the estimate. In the most courteous terms the Khans have now expressed themselves willing to pay up to, but not beyond, 1,000 tomans.

"I should be obliged if you would try to get Lynch in London to undertake not to claim more than the amount mentioned. I shall instruct their agent at Ahwaz to start work upon receiving assurance to that effect.

"It would, I consider, be foolish of Lynch to reject these terms, which are the best I have any hope of obtaining, and, in view of the work to be done, seem generous."

The Vice-Consul's view has, I venture to say, my strong support.

[28681]

No. 358.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.(No. 339.)
Sir,*Foreign Office, August 24, 1908.*

I HAVE received Mr. Barclay's despatch No. 340 of the 14th June, inquiring what answer should be returned to a request made by the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, on behalf of his Government, to be furnished with copies of certain documents relating to the Turco-Persian frontier dispute.

I transmit to your Excellency herewith copy of a despatch which I accordingly addressed to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg,^{*} instructing him to ascertain whether the Russian Government have any objection to the communication of these papers, together with copy of Sir A. Nicolson's reply,[†] from which it appears that they have none, and that the necessary instructions to comply with Mirza Riza Khan's request will be sent to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have accordingly to request your Excellency to concert with your Russian colleague, with a view to take the necessary action in this matter, and to transmit herewith copies of the three documents, the communication of which is desired by the Persian Government,[‡] together with the Parliamentary paper asked for.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[29537]

No. 359.

Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received August 25.)

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,
August 24, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to reply to your letter of the 13th instant relative to the repairs to the Godar bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road.

The report on the defect observed last year in the masonry piers of this bridge was submitted to a Consulting Engineer in London, Mr. Humphreys, who recommends certain structural alterations. The material will cost some 200*l.* delivered in Ahwaz. We cannot state the further cost of transport and construction without sending an Engineer to the spot to prepare an estimate.

We do not desire to press this considerable expense upon the Khans unless it is absolutely necessary and cannot be deferred. But the only ground on which we could be justified in neglecting the advice of the Consulting Engineer is a competent expert opinion formed on the spot.

Our road Engineer, Mr. B. Sotham, is now returning to his post at Tehran after furlough, and we have decided to send him out via Ahwaz, to make a thorough examination and to report. He will, of course, at the same time frame as close an estimate as possible of the probable cost of the repairs which he may consider necessary. We estimate the additional cost of his journey by this route, which we shall have to claim from the Khans, at not exceeding 50*l.*

He must start early in September, as he must reach Tehran before winter sets in to examine our own roads.

We trust that you will approve of our decision and support our action.

We are telegraphing in cypher to Ahwaz in the following sense:—

"Godar bridge. Sotham leaves September, via Ahwaz, to report whether Humphrey's alterations necessary and to frame estimate cost repairs. Insist that Khans must pay the difference of sending him out via Karun not exceeding 50*l.*, and probably less. We have explained position to Foreign Office. Keep our Consul fully informed."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. W. MACLEAN, *Secretary.*

^{*} No. 183.[†] No. 323.[‡] Lord Cowley, No. 108, March 17, 1848 (Nos. 9, 10, and 11).

[29582]

No. 360.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 25.)

(No. 278.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 25, 1908.

THE case of Hormuz red oxide.

The Financial Adviser to the Persian Government has been consulted by the Minister of Finance as to the possibility of raising funds by cancelling, and selling for a term of years, the Concession held by Moin-ut-Tujjar. The purchase money, which would be divided among the Shah's entourage, was mentioned by the Minister as being 200,000*l.*

In the opinion of M. Bizot the German Legation originated the suggestion. He wished to know how he should answer the Minister of Finance, and what our interests were. After describing the position to him in outline, I proposed that his answer to the Minister of Finance should be that the Persian Government were debarred from obtaining advances except on the conditions stipulated in Sir C. Spring-Rice's note of the 31st August, 1907 (see his despatch No. 196 of 1907), and that the transaction is merely an advance in disguise.

It is possible that we might succeed in getting the Concession for a British Company, but it would involve the hostility of Moin-ut-Tujjar and the Assembly might call in question later the arbitrary cancellation of his Concession. It would also seem that we had made use of the present political situation for our own advantage.

The best solution possibly would be to urge the formation of the Company suggested by Ellinger upon Moin-ut-Tujjar. He would thus be secured from further blackmail and his Concession would be insured to him.

[29574]

No. 361.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 25.)

(No. 279.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 25, 1908.

VICE-CONSUL at Tabreez communicated following the 24th August, No. 120, relative to the situation:—

"Yesterday the Local Assembly presented to the Governor-General a Petition to the effect that they were the Shah's loyal subjects so long as he maintained the Constitution. They refuse to disarm until the Assembly is opened and the Members are recalled. The arrest and punishment after trial of the leaders in the Royalist quarter is insisted upon, and further, they demand that the affairs of this province be supervised by the Tabreez Local Assembly until the Parliament is reassembled. The Governor-General said, in reply, that the Shah would be informed of the demands.

"For a week past there have been at least 5,000 revolutionaries under arms, and their numbers are increasing daily."

[29683]

No. 362.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 26.)

(No. 150.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, August 26, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Following is text of proposed identic communication to be made to Persian Government, given to me by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day, which he thinks might be telegraphed to the Representatives at Tehran to present, if you approve of it:—

"The Cabinets of St. Petersburg and London, having learned that Turkish troops continued their move forward on Persian territory in the direction of Lake Urumia, asked for explanations on the subject through their Embassies at Constantinople.

"It is with sincere satisfaction that they are in a position to inform the Persian Government that the Ottoman Government have given them most formal assurances that Turkish troops who have penetrated into Persian territory beyond zone recognized

as forming the object of delimitation will be recalled without delay, and that the Porte is resolved to arrive at a friendly solution of difficulties with Persia.

"In bringing the above to the knowledge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of His Majesty the Shah, the Legation of Russia [Great Britain] is pleased to believe that the Persian Government will continue, on their part, to use necessary moderation and will be able henceforth to arrive, without the mediation of Russia or Great Britain, at a definite solution of their frontier dispute with the Ottoman Government."

[29648]

No. 363.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 26.)

(No. 280.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 26, 1908.

IN reply to your telegram No. 218 of the 21st instant:

The second alternative will be adopted by the Consul-General.

[29673]

No. 364.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 26.)

(No. 281.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 26, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 278 of the 25th instant:

Resident agrees that best solution would be formation of Ellinger Company.

[29582]

No. 365.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 223.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide.

I concur in views contained in your telegram No. 278 of the 25th August.

Ellinger is being urged to come to terms with Strick and to form a Company.

The proposal to cancel the Moin's Concession should be resisted by you.

[26812]

No. 366.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 266. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,* forwarding copy of a report addressed to the Government of India by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, reviewing the general political situation in the Persian Gulf.

Your Excellency will observe that in section 9 of this report Major Cox suggests that His Majesty's Government should consider the advisability of approaching the Russian Government with a view to obtain the abolition of the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas.

His Majesty's Government understand that the Russian Government intend shortly to transfer the present Russian Minister at Tehran to another post, and, if you should think it advisable, an opportunity might be taken after M. de Hartwig has left Persia of calling the attention of M. Isvolsky to the point raised by Major Cox.

I leave the time and manner of taking this step entirely to your Excellency's discretion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[28766]

No. 367.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the India Office,* forwarding copies of correspondence received from the Government of India, in which they recommend a proposal for strengthening the guard of His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas, which now consists of four mounted men, by the addition of a detachment of sixteen infantry, instead of increasing it by twelve cavalry, in accordance with the scheme previously suggested.

Sir E. Grey is of opinion that the recommendation of the Government of India should be adopted, and I am accordingly to express the hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury will see their way to permit the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the expense involved in the transaction, i.e., 204l. initial and 360l. recurring (on an average of three years).

I am to add that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, who has been consulted by telegraph on the subject, concurs in the recommendation of the Government of India.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[26812]

No. 368.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,† forwarding copy of a Report addressed to the Government of India by His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, reviewing the general political situation in the Persian Gulf.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive any observations which Viscount Morley may have to offer on this Report in general, and particularly with regard to the following questions treated therein:—

10. The appointment of a British Vice-Consul at Lingah.

It will be observed that this measure is strongly recommended by Mr. Marling, and Sir E. Grey is anxious to learn the view taken of the proposal by Lord Morley.

11. Major Cox inquires whether His Majesty's Government have finally decided not to embark on any scheme for the policing of the Bushire-Shiraz and Bunder Abbas-Kerman trade routes unless compelled to do so in order to save the lives of British subjects.

14. Major Cox submits that, in view of the present political situation in Persia, the existing arrangement whereby three of His Majesty's ships are subsidized for service in the Persian Gulf is no longer adequate as a support to himself in the defence of British interests in that region.

Should Lord Morley concur in this view it would become necessary to approach the proper Departments with a view to the revision of the arrangement at present in force.

I am to add, with reference to section 1 of Major Cox's Report, that the question of instructing Mr. Barclay, His Majesty's newly appointed Minister at Tehran, to proceed to his post by way of the Persian Gulf has been considered, but that the difficulty and inconvenience attendant upon such a journey, as well as the delay which it would necessarily entail, appear to outweigh any advantage to be gained from undertaking it, and that Mr. Barclay will therefore follow the ordinary route.

Mr. Barclay might be able to visit the Gulf later on, or it might be advisable to adopt the alternative plan for which Mr. Marling appears to express a preference, and to instruct Major Cox to visit Tehran at the earliest opportunity after Mr. Barclay's arrival there.

With regard to section 9, I am to state that a copy of Mr. Marling's despatch will be forwarded to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, with instructions to use his discretion in taking an opportunity, if he should think it advisable, of approaching the Russian Government with regard to the withdrawal of the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas, after certain changes which are to be introduced into the personnel of the Russian establishments in Persia have taken place.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28974]

No. 369.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, in accordance with the suggestion contained in the last sentence of your letter of the 25th ultimo, he caused a letter to be addressed to the Board of Trade requesting them to furnish such confidential information as they might be able to procure regarding the constitution and standing of Messrs. Hadji, Ali, Akbar, and Co. (Limited), of Manchester, who are desirous of obtaining from the Persian Government a Concession to extract red oxide on the Island of Siri.

I am to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the Board forwarding a Memorandum which contains the desired particulars,* and to state that Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn, with as little delay as may be convenient, the views of Viscount Morley as to the attitude which His Majesty's Government should adopt towards the Company in the light of this information.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[28766]

No. 370.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, inquiring his views on a proposal recommended by the Government of India for strengthening the guard of His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas, which now consists of four mounted men, by the addition of a detachment of sixteen infantry instead of increasing it by twelve cavalry, in accordance with the scheme previously suggested.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey is of opinion that the recommendation of the Government of India should be adopted, and to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter which he has caused to be addressed to the Treasury,† requesting the sanction of the Lords Commissioners to the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the expense involved in the transaction.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29122]

No. 371.

*Foreign Office to India Office.**Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.*

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant, forwarding copies of telegrams exchanged with the Government of India relative to the dispatch of a detachment for the relief of the escort at His Majesty's Consulate-General at Ispahan.

* No. 335.

† No. 367.

I am to inform you, in reply, that Sir E. Grey concurs in the terms of the reply sent to the Government of India approving the action taken by them in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29123]

No. 372.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant relative to the proposal to obtain from the Persian Government the control by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah.

I am to request that the necessary instructions may now be sent to the Department at Tehran to enter into negotiations with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs on the subject on the lines laid down in Memorandum of the Director-in-chief, copy of which formed the inclosure in your letter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

29447]

No. 373.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 26, 1908.

IN continuation of my letter of the 13th instant relative to the proposed repairs to the Godar bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan road, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has received a further telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, stating that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz reports that, on his return to Ispahan, he found that Lieutenant Ranking, who had been performing his duties in his absence, had been supplied by Messrs. Lynch with a rough estimate of the sum required, which amounted to 180*l*. Lieutenant Ranking had thereupon written to the Bakhtiari Khans, giving the estimate as 1,000 tomans, and their Excellencies have now replied in the most courteous language signifying their willingness to pay up to, but not beyond, that sum.

Captain Lorimer states that these terms are the best which he can hope to obtain, and that, in view of the work to be done, they appear to him to be generous, and he considers that it would be a mistake on the part of your Company to refuse them.

He therefore asks that the Company may be urged not to claim more than the sum indicated, and states that, on the receipt of their assurance to that effect, he will inform their agent at Ahwaz, so that he may begin operations.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey strongly recommends that the advice given by Captain Lorimer should be followed, and to request that you will apprise him, with as little delay as may be convenient, of the decision reached on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29764]

No. 374.

Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received August 27.)

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,
August 24, 1908.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of the 14th instant, I have the honour to state that my Board is aware of the steps taken by Mr. Marling in the matter of the Shellilich shed, and fully recognize the conspicuous ability, as well as the patience, which he has displayed in bringing this long-standing question to the brink of a settlement.

It is, however, evident that, in spite of the forbearance shown and in spite of the energetic measures which have been latterly taken by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, the Persian Government are resolved to maintain their consistent attitude of

obstruction. It is notorious at Shuster and Ahwaz that the property on which the store is being erected belongs to the Seyids, and the action of the Persian Government in endeavouring to dispossess them of their property in favour of their nominee, the Mouin-el-Tejar, is regarded as arbitrary and unjust. Even if it were compatible with the reasonable requirements of trade that there should be a continuance of the present state of affairs, under which from year to year over a period of nearly twenty years all our efforts to obtain a store for the goods conveyed by us to Shuster have been frustrated, and these goods have still to be deposited on the river bank with all the risk of consequent damage, the dispossession of the Seyids, after they have collected very full evidence of the validity of their title for the information of His Majesty's Legation, and after the Legation has authorized us to regard the lease from them as valid and to proceed with the construction of the store, would be certain to produce a very bad effect locally, and seriously to detract from the esteem in which British merchants are held. Under these circumstances, my Board trust that His Majesty's Government may authorize His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to bring the necessary pressure to bear upon the Persian Government in order that our workmen may be allowed to proceed with their work in accordance with the terms of our lease.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. W. MACLEAN,
Secretary.

[29792]

No. 375.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 282.)
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 27, 1908.

THE Persian Government has been notified by the Turkish Ambassador that the Turkish Government intend to send an escort to protect the Turkish Consul and subjects at Tabreez. The proposal has raised the strongest objections on the part of the Persian Government, who declare that the step is at the present moment uncalled for, as negotiations are proceeding between the two parties, and the town has been comparatively quiet for ten days. Could His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople dissuade the Turkish Government? Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs would be most grateful if this could be done.

Following is Confidential:—

The Turkish Military Attaché is the originator of the proposal. He is always ready to forward anything tending towards international interference, and desires to see Turkey play a part in Persian affairs on the same footing as England and Russia. The German Legation is his inspiration, and the Turkish Ambassador, who is old and indolent, is under his influence.

[29796]

No. 376.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 283.)
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 27, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 223 of yesterday respecting Hormuz oxide, yesterday I explained to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that I thought His Majesty's Government would have strong objections to an advance in connection with the Oxide Concession for the reasons stated in my telegram No. 278 of the 25th instant. In reply his Highness stated that he was unaware that such an operation was contemplated, and hinted that the German Legation must have originated the proposal. He added that "nothing would be given to Germany," as the Shah was well aware what German aims implied.

I am informed by M. de Hartwig that last autumn the Shah promised him that Germany would be given no Concessions without the knowledge and consent of Russia. His Excellency said he would remind His Majesty of this undertaking.

[29449]

No. 377.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 225.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 27, 1908.

NATIONAL Bank.

I learn from the French Chargé d'Affaires here that your French colleague has been approached by M. de Hartwig with reference to the necessity of creating in Persia a national bank by means of capital supplied by Great Britain and Russia, the bank to be controlled by the Russian and Imperial banks, and under the management of Mr. Rabino.

We are asked by the French Government to state our view. Can you supply any information or give your view of the matter?

[29582]

No. 378.

Foreign Office to Mr. Ellinger.

Dear Mr. Ellinger,

Foreign Office, August 27, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 12th instant, relative to the Hormuz red oxide question, I write to tell you that we have just received a telegram from our Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, reporting that there is a serious danger that the Persian Government may attempt to raise money by cancelling the Moin-ut-Tujjar's Concession and selling a similar Concession to somebody else for a term of years.

Mr. Marling is of opinion that the best way to prevent the Persian Government from taking this step would be to urge the Moin to form the Company proposed by you, which would give us a ground for intervention in defence of British interests, and thus ensure to the Moin the continued enjoyment of his Concession, and secure him against further attempts at blackmail.

Our Consul-General at Bushire supports this view, and we concur in it.

I therefore recommend that you should make a further serious attempt to come to an agreement with Mr. Strick with a view to the formation of a Company with as little delay as possible, failing which there is a prospect, by no means remote, of the whole business passing out of the reach of British enterprise for good and all.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29849]

No. 379.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 28.)

Sir,

India Office, August 26, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 11th instant, inclosing a translation of a Concession granted by the late Shah to a group of Persian Notables in 1906 for a Concession for roads and trains, "Renard" and "Escont," I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the view of Secretary Sir E. Grey that this particular Concession is now apparently unimportant.

He notes that no mention is made in the despatch of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran of the Ispahan-Bushire Road Concession referred to in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 244 dated the 25th October last, to the Government of India, or to the Sani-ed-Dowleh's automobile Concession, of which a copy was inclosed in Sir A. Hardinge's despatch No. 137 of the 24th July, 1904. Lord Morley is unaware of the present position with regard to these Concessions, or whether any inquiry is desirable regarding them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN J. CAMPBELL.

[29914]

No. 380.

Manchester Chamber of Commerce to Foreign Office.—(Received August 28.)

Dear Sir,

Manchester, August 27, 1908.

I HAVE pleasure in introducing to you (by means of this letter) Mr. Walter Flinn, who is a partner of the firm of Messrs. P. H. Ziegler and Co., members of the Chamber, and one of the oldest established houses in the Persian trade in Manchester.

Mr. Flinn wishes to confer with you respecting a difficulty experienced by his firm in connection with their trade in Persia.

The Acting President of the Chamber will be glad if you will be so good as to give to Mr. Flinn such assistance as may be in your power.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) WALTER SPEAKMAN, *Secretary.*

[29914]

No. 381.

Messrs. Ph. Ziegler and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received August 28.)

Sir,

Manchester, August 27, 1908.

AFTER consultation with the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, we beg to bring the following matter to your notice:—

We are an English firm of long standing with establishments in various towns in Persia, and trading there under the style of Ziegler and Co., our head establishment in that country being in Tabreez, in which city serious fighting has been going on for more than two months past. We hold a large stock of goods of various descriptions in our godowns there, and we have large outstandings of money due to us by the various merchants of that place.

His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General (Mr. Wratislaw) having been absent for some months at Urumia, where he still is, our people at Tabreez applied to the Acting Consul there, Mr. Charles Stevens, requesting him to wire to His Britannic Majesty's Legation at Tehran to take steps to hold the Persian Government responsible for any losses which we may eventually sustain through its inability to maintain order.

On the 4th August His Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul at Tabreez informed our firm there that His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran would hold the Persian Government responsible for any direct losses sustained by us through pillage by Government troops. To this our Tabreez firm replied on the 5th August to His Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul there that they did not find this reply satisfactory, stating that what they desired was to be safeguarded not only against losses incurred solely through pillage by Government troops, but also against losses occasioned by any party as the outcome of the inability of the Persian authorities to maintain order. This was duly communicated to the British Legation in Tehran.

On the 25th instant we received a telegram from our firm in Tabreez, signed also by Hildebrand F. Stevens, another British merchant of that city, stating that no reply had been received from His Britannic Majesty's Legation in Tehran to this second message, and they urgently request us (Ph. Ziegler and Co., Manchester) to appeal to the Foreign Office in London, as the situation was growing worse—a fact which is corroborated by the newspaper reports, to the effect that the extortions practised by the revolutionary organizations are becoming intolerable.

Our friends seem to think that it is a serious matter for us that, whereas the Russian Consul at Tabreez is on the spot, our own Consul-General should unfortunately be absent at such a time at Urumia.

We therefore now urgently appeal to you for protection, and if you will instruct the British Legation at Tehran, by wire, to inform the Shah's Government that any losses which we may have to submit to owing to the inability of the Persian authorities to maintain order will have to be made good by the Persian Government you will exceedingly oblige your, &c.

(Signed) PH. ZIEGLER AND Co.

[29799]

No. 382.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 28.)

(No. 242.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 28, 1908.

FOLLOWING repeated to St. Petersburg:—

Turco-Persian frontier, and proposed identic communication to the Persian Government.

With reference to your telegram No. 178 of to-day's date, in view of the fact that, desirous not to embarrass the Turkish Government at this moment and that they should have an opportunity for spontaneous action, I did not make any representations, the term "most formal assurances" appears to me to be rather strong.

The statement of the Grand Vizier reported in my telegram No. 233 of the 20th instant was made quite informally.

Until information reaches us that the Turkish troops are actually retiring, would it not be better that the dispatch of the identic note should be delayed?

[29964]

No. 383.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 29.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 28th instant, relative to the Shiraz escort.

India Office, August 28, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 383.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 28, 1908.

PLEASE see your telegram as to Shiraz escort, dated the 18th July.

We have sanctioned arrangement by which the relieved escort will leave their rifles at Bushire, and relieving party will take them back. By this means difficulty with Customs authorities will be obviated, and five spare rifles will be available for the use of the British colony. We have informed His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, of this arrangement.

[30034]

No. 384.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 29.)

(No. 284.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 29, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports that the revolutionaries have informed the Central Government that they will not be responsible for the consequences to the town if they do not get a satisfactory reply to their demands within twenty-four hours. The people are desperate, volunteers are arriving in large numbers from villages, and rumours of disturbances in Ispahan, Shiraz, and Tehran are being circulated to animate their courage. The Governor is evidently awaiting reinforcements, but, even with them, Mr. Stevens does not believe, in view of above, that he will be able to effect anything.

The telegraph wires are all cut to Urumia.

[29792]

No. 385.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 327.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 29, 1908.

PROTECTION of Ottoman Consulate at Tabreez.

Please inform Russian Government of substance of Mr. Marling's telegram No. 282 of the 27th instant and inquire what is their view of the matter. You should add that, if they are disposed to address a communication on the subject to the Porte, I would suggest that instructions should be sent to the Representatives of the two Powers at Constantinople as follows:—

"Please inform the Ottoman Government that we have been appealed to by Persia to persuade them not to send an escort to Tabreez. Such a step is unnecessary for protection and would create an unfortunate effect in the town. Moreover negotiations are in progress.

"Perhaps in these circumstances the proposal will not be acted on by the Porte."

[29683]

No. 386.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 329.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 29, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

His Majesty's Government agree to join in making the communication proposed in your telegram No. 150 of the 26th instant. As, however, no representation has been made by His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople since the introduction of the new régime, we should prefer that the first paragraph should be omitted, and that in the second paragraph the words "stated to them" should be substituted for the words "given them the most formal assurances."

If the first paragraph is left out, it would be necessary to substitute in the first line of the second paragraph the words "the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and London" for the word "they," and it would be well that the proposed wording should be seen by the Russian and British Ambassadors at Constantinople, in order to make sure that it does not overstate the actual facts.

I told the Turkish Ambassador here that the situation on the Turco-Persian frontier was bad, and that instructions had been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to put before the Sublime Porte a statement of the facts of the case, in the belief that they would take steps to remedy the existing state of affairs. But the joint communication through the Embassies, which had been intended, was rendered unnecessary by the assurance given spontaneously by the Grand Vizier.

[30025]

No. 387.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 228.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 29, 1908.

HORMUZ red oxide.

Negotiations between Ellinger and Strick have been broken off. The former acknowledges that the terms are too stiff, but says he is unable to offer better ones because the Moin now prefers selling the oxide direct, and does not care at all about having a contract.

The Moin seems to have gained the impression that as soon as the Company was formed our readiness to tender him unofficial protection and good offices would be abated, because the Company would not be affected if he were dispossessed by the Persian Government, but would continue under the new holder of the Concession.

You might reassure the Moin on this point, if you consider it prudent, and inform him that we greatly hope he will consent to give Strick better terms to admit of his participation and to formation of Company by Ellinger.

[30039]

No. 388.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 30.)

(No. 244.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 30, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I was informed yesterday by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Council of Ministers had decided to withdraw the greater part of the troops now concentrated in the neighbourhood of the frontier, to evacuate such places within the zone as are incontestably Persian, as well as Passova and other places which lie east of the zone. It is the intention of the Turkish Government to restore the *status quo* which during the last few years has been violated.

[30040]

No. 389.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 30.)

(No. 245.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 30, 1908.

TABREEZ.

With reference to Mr. Marling's telegram No. 282 of the 27th instant, I am informed by the Grand Vizier that, in view of the Shah's solemn assurances that the Turkish subjects and Consulate at Tabreez will in no way be molested, the Ottoman Government have given up the idea of sending an escort to that town.

[30107]

No. 390.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 195.)

Sir,

Guluhek, August 1, 1908.

THE Belgian Chargé d'Affaires has spoken to me once or twice lately about the renewal of the contracts of nine of the Belgians in the service of the Customs, which were about to expire. He said that though he encountered no definite refusal on the part of the Persian Government, yet neither had he been able to obtain a definite promise that these contracts would be renewed, and as some of them would be running out in a very few days, he was anxious to settle the matter without delay, and asked me if I would take some step to assist him. The Russian Minister, whom he had approached with a similar request, had appeared to think any action for the moment unnecessary and inopportune.

I promised to urge the Minister for Foreign Affairs to obtain the renewal of the contracts without delay. I mentioned the matter to M. de Hartwig a day or two later, and found that he thought M. de Warzée unnecessarily anxious, as after the pledges given to us that the Customs régime would be maintained, it was certain that the contracts would be renewed. He would, however, speak to Ala-es-Sultaneh on the subject, so as to prevent any confusion arising by the expiration of the contracts.

The question was satisfactorily settled before the end of July by the renewal of the contracts of MM. Lequifère, Constant, Bottian, and Duhem, while five others, with whose services I understand that M. Mornard is not wholly satisfied, are to be replaced by other functionaries to be sent out from Belgium.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30109]

No. 391.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 197. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Guluhek, August 10, 1908.

ON three or four occasions during the past month the Russian Minister has complained to me about the attitude of the French Minister, comparing it unfavourably with that of his predecessor, and M. Lecomte has told me that

M. de Hartwig had represented his conduct as so unfriendly that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had spoken confidentially to Admiral Touchard on the subject.

M. de Hartwig's accusations are not very explicit. They hardly amount to more than that M. Lecomte is not always very discreet in his comments on passing events; but a day or two ago he told me that M. Lecomte had been talking openly in the presence of the German Minister of the inevitability of an international financial control in Persia, something after the model of the International Finance Commission at Athens. M. de Hartwig thought this was most regrettable, as it would inspire the German Minister with the idea that Russia and England were aiming at some form of control in which France would have a share.

I said that I thought that the idea of triple action was less that of M. Lecomte than of M. de la Martinière, who had so often talked to us both of what he called a "bloc à trois." I thought M. Lecomte quite understood his rôle here, but he was perhaps rather fond of airing his opinions, and inclined to take things lightly.

M. de Hartwig would, I think, be glad to see M. Lecomte removed, as he must recognize that his French colleague's account of the policy of the Russian Legation in Tehran has been most damaging to him. His object in speaking to me is to get me to admit that M. Lecomte's attitude is likely to prejudice Anglo-Russian interests, so that he may be able to inform his Government that I share his views. I have been careful to give non-committal replies, for, should I express dissidence with him, M. de Hartwig would probably inform his Government that M. Lecomte is strongly prejudiced in favour of England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30110]

No. 392.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 198.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 10, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a note which I have received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the encroachments of Turkish troops on Persian territory in the neighbourhood of Urumia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 392.

Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.

June 30, 1908.

ACCORDING to the information received by the Foreign Office, some Turkish troops have encroached on Persian territory and entered Chebrik. Mir Alay and the son of Sheikh Sadeek and Turkish troops have encroached on Persian territory at Sumai, and some troops have gone to Band, near the town of Urumia. Besides these facts the tribe of Marzegi had been incited to plunder the villages in the Salmas district, and this has been done. The Kurds, by the instigation of the intruders, have not refrained from murder, plunder, and ravishing Muslims and Christians in the Urumia villages, and they have not even spared mosques and churches. In other places also the intruders are inciting the tribes and soldiers to encroachment and disturbances.

As the open encroachment of the Turkish military authorities on Persian territory and their misbehaviour are contrary to the Treaty and friendship existing between the two countries, and are also inconsistent with international law, I consider it necessary to inform you of the facts, and to protest against the action of the Turkish military authorities, and to request you to be good enough to lay before your Government the acts of violence committed by them against the absolute rights of the Persian Government.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) ALA-ES-SULTANEH.

[30112]

No. 393.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 200.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 10, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 182 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a note which I have addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the suspension for three years of the sinking fund on the Loan of 1903-4.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 393.

Mr. Marling to Ala-es-Sultaneh.

Your Highness,

Gulahek, July 25, 1908.

BY his note of the 31st August, 1907, His Majesty's Minister had the honour to inform your Highness of the terms on which His Britannic Majesty's Government was prepared to assent to the request of the Persian Government for the suspension for three years of the sinking fund on the Loan of 1903-4. To this note no reply was made, but no payment on capital account was made, and the interest was, moreover, allowed to fall into arrears. His Majesty's Government considered that they were in the circumstances justified in assuming that the terms above alluded to were tacitly accepted by the Persian Government, and I was accordingly instructed to inform your Highness' predecessor of that view. In reply to my note of the 24th February, in which I carried out those instructions, his Excellency Mushir-ed-Dowleh informed me that a reply to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's note would be sent me shortly. Although five months have elapsed, I have, however, received no answer; and I have now received the instructions of His Majesty's Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform your Highness that, in the absence of the promised reply, and in view of the fact that the interest on the loan is again in arrears, and that no payment has been made on account of the sinking fund since the 4th April, 1906, His Majesty's Government can no longer admit of any discussion of the terms laid down in Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's note above mentioned.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30113]

No. 394.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 201.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 10, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report that Salar-ed-Dowleh, the Shah's brother, whose abortive attempt at insurrection was reported in Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's despatch No. 133 of the 18th June, 1907, sent a messenger to the Legation on the 6th instant to say that he was in danger of his life, and asking that I would obtain a renewal of the assurances for his safety which the British and Russian Legations had received from the Shah a year ago. According to the messenger's story the Shah had sent two eunuchs to Eshratabad, where Salar-ed-Dowleh is still confined, who kept constant watch over His Imperial Highness day and night, and the Prince was afraid that they intended to administer poison to him.

During the spring Salar-ed-Dowleh made an attempt to enlist the sympathies of the Russian Legation, and was so far successful that M. de Hartwig obtained some relaxation of the stringent guard under which His Imperial Highness was placed; taking advantage of it Salar-ed-Dowleh made secret preparations for escape, but his intentions were discovered and frustrated.

Considering the Prince's antecedents and his well-known fondness for intrigue, it appeared to me that in existing circumstances there was ample justification for precautionary measures on the part of the Shah, and I also thought that His Imperial Highness' fears for his safety were greatly exaggerated. I therefore sent a reply that

I understood that the guarantees for his safety obtained by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice related only to the events of 1907, and were never intended to extend to the future, and that in the circumstances I must decline to take any steps on his behalf.

I mentioned the incident a few days later to the Russian Minister, who in return told me that when Shoa-es-Sultaneh left Persia for Russia about a month ago he had learnt that His Imperial Highness intended to apply to the Czar to grant Russian nationality to one of his sons. M. de Hartwig at once telegraphed to M. Isvolsky to urge that the application should not be granted, except in accordance with the provisions of the Russian Law of Naturalization. The request, however, had been declined by M. Isvolsky before M. de Hartwig's telegram had arrived.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30115]

No. 395.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 203.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez, inclosing a letter which has been addressed to him by the Armenian Archbishop of Azerbaijan, in regard to the deplorable state of the villages in the neighbourhood of Urmia.

I fear that it is hopeless to expect that in present circumstances the Persian Government will be able to do anything to improve the situation in these districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 395.

Consul-General Stevens to Mr. Marling.

Sir,

Tabreez, July 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a letter I have received from his Grace the Armenian Archbishop residing in Tabreez, drawing attention to the recent events in the districts of Urmia and Salmas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES E. STEVENS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 395.

Archbishop Karapet to Consul-General Stevens.

Sir,

Tauris, June 9 (22), 1908.

AS the spiritual head of the Armenian people inhabiting the province of Azerbaijan, I regard it my imperative duty to lay herewith the most deplorable and dangerous condition of the Armenian population, as well as of the other races of Urmia, before His Britannic Majesty's Consulate-General.

In accordance with reliable information I have just received, three villages in Barandour, Barbarou, and Sardarout, inhabited by Armenians and Syrians, were attacked by the Kurds on the 29th ultimo (11th June, *s.s.*) and totally plundered. Women, and even little girls from 8 to 10, were violated, some of whom throw themselves into the river to escape from the hands of their torturers. Many were also carried away by the marauders. About 700 of these poor people fled to the town and found shelter in the Armenian Church at Urmia. Some 150 souls are lost, of whom 8 were killed by the Kurds before the eyes of the fleeing refugees; what fate has befallen the remainder is not known.

It is well known to your Consulate that these refugees, destitute of everything and without any means of living, cannot expect any kind of help from the local authorities of Urmia, and that the little assistance which only their fellow-Armenians are giving them can of course not last long. The situation is getting worse from day

to day, and no help can be sent from outside to those unfortunate sufferers in their great need.

Considering that the same terrible fate is threatening to strike also the other villages of Urmia, and the condition of the Salmas district, whose population is largely composed of Armenians and other Christians, is not less dangerous at this moment, I have the honour to request most earnestly that the statement may be communicated to His Britannic Majesty's Government for kind and urgent consideration, seeing that thousands of poor, innocent, and defenceless Christian people, owing to the continuation of the abnormal state of affairs on the Turco-Persian boundary, are doomed to great sufferings and to sure perdition. I have addressed this same statement with same appeal to the honourable Representatives of the Russian, French, and United States' Governments in this city, hoping and trusting that by a collective and unanimous noble action new threatening similar disasters may successfully be prevented, and that the cry which ascends to heaven imploring justice will find a prompt hearing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) Archbishop KARAPET,
*Prelate of Armenians
of Azerbaijan.*

[30116]

No. 396.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 204.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 11, 1908.

WITH reference to Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 214 of the 4th instant relative to the demonstration that took place before the Persian Embassy at Constantinople, I have the honour to report that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that the Shah's reply to Arfa-ed-Dowleh was to the effect that the disorders in Tabreez were merely the outcome of local faction fighting, and were in no way connected with the Constitutional question. His Imperial Majesty said further that he had promised to convoke the Medjliss at a fixed date, and would not fail to keep his promise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30117]

No. 397.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 205.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 12, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia during the past four weeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 397.

No. 8.—*Monthly Summary of Events in Persia.*

Tehran.

BETWEEN the 15th and 20th July a number of persons took refuge in the village of Gulahak, and by the 30th July as many as 150 persons had collected in the open in one garden alone. Every endeavour was made by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to induce them to withdraw. After great difficulty the majority left by the 7th August.

On the 31st July about 150 people took refuge at the Turkish Embassy in the country, but were induced to leave on the 6th August, by which time guarantees for their safety were procured from the Shah.

On the 2nd August some Cossacks appeared in the vicinity of Gulahak, and a

number of them actually entered the village, where they proposed to stay. They were requested to withdraw, and the matter was settled without an incident.

Nizam-es-Sultaneh, who was Prime Minister until the 16th May, died suddenly on the 6th August at the age of about 75.

Sepahdar (Nasr-es-Sultaneh), who was until lately head of the Telegraphs and Posts, was recalled from Astrabad and sent to Azerbaijan in command of a military expedition. He left Tehran on the 28th July.

The Zil-es-Sultan left Ispahan for Tehran on the 8th August.

Mr. Landon, special correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," arrived in Tehran at the end of July, and proposes to go on to India.

Captain Haworth, His Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah, and Captain Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, have both been staying at Gulahek during the past few weeks.

The General Situation.

The Shah remains at Bagh-i-Shah, where preparations are being made for a long stay. Amir Behadur Jang, who has received the title of Sepah-Salar and post of War Minister, seems to be all-powerful. His relations with Colonel Liakhoff, who is still in military command of Tehran, do not appear to be very cordial.

Although the popular movement has, to all intents and purposes, been successfully crushed since the 23rd June, and the only effective resistance has been that offered by the people of Tabreez, who are still fighting, there are ample indications of future trouble in the form of a recrudescence of the movement. The clergy of Nejeff have pronounced themselves against the Shah, and though their telegrams have been suppressed the news is generally known. The effect of the news from Turkey has not been very great, and will probably only react later. In the meantime the Shah appears to be in great financial difficulties, and M. Bizot is at present engaged in preparing a scheme by which something might be done to improve the situation. The extraordinary military preparations at Bagh-i-Shah and the dispatch of troops to Azerbaijan have contributed to deplete the Treasury.

Prince Jelal-ed-Dowleh, Ala-ed-Dowleh, and Serdar Mansur, who were arrested by the Shah's orders on the 7th June, have now left the country for Europe.

Seyed Abdullah, the Mujtehed, who was sent to Kerbela, is reported to have been detained on the Persian side of the border near Kasr-i-Shirin.

The refugees who remained in the Legation at Tehran after the delivery of the Shah's Rescript guaranteeing their safety on the 11th July, finally departed on the 18th and 19th July in carriages for Enzeli en route to Europe. This is reported upon fully in a separate despatch.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,
Oriental Secretary.

Urumia.

Mr. Wratislaw reports that Urumia was quite unaffected by the Shah's *coup d'Etat*. He expresses the opinion that the Shah cannot count on having it all his own way in Azerbaijan, in spite of his apparent success for the moment. He states that the Turkish Frontier Commissioner treats the new Russian Consul with studied neglect.

Resht.

1. Zahir-ed-Dowleh, Governor of Ghilan, left Resht early in July. His destination was not known. The new Governor, Serdar Afkham, left Tehran for Resht at the end of July.

2. The Russian gun-boat "Krasnovodsk" left Enzeli for Baku about the 20th July.

3. Taki Zadeh, and the other exiled refugees from Tehran, left Resht on the 24th July and duly reached Baku.

4. The silk crop is 50 per cent. below estimate. This will entail loss to cocoon importers.

Meshed.

1. The Reform party at Meshed has accepted defeat without the slightest idea of fighting.

2. It was reported that the Shah was about to remove Rukn-ed-Dowleh from the Governor-Generalship of Khorassan, but the British and Russian Legations intervened on his behalf, and he remained at his post. He appears to be very grateful for our assistance, and to have a firmer hold on the province than when the National Assembly was in existence. His Majesty's Consul-General thinks his retention in office will tend to the maintenance of order.

3. Both the Shah and the Governor-General are trying to make money out of the Chieftainship of the Timuri tribe, the rival candidates for the post being Showket-ed-Dowleh and Jelal-es-Sultan. The tribesmen threatened to go and settle in Afghanistan if a Chief distasteful to them was forced upon them.

4. The Minister of Finance telegraphed about the 15th July to the Governor-General that the Palang Kuh route was to be constructed at once.

Turbat-i-Hayderi.

The people received the news of the *coup d'Etat* almost with indifference. The Governor is strengthening his position, and is very outspoken against the priests, whom he considers to be the cause of all the trouble in Persia.

Ispahan.

1. It appears that the Shah has no supporters in Ispahan, but, in spite of this, the Nationalist leaders seem to be in a great state of fear. The Russian Consul-General has done his best to keep them in this state, and has even gone so far as to write to the Governor reminding him that the Shah was prepared to send troops to his aid, if necessary, to put a stop to the disturbance in Ispahan. The Ekbal-ed-Dowleh, who replaces Ala-ul-Mulk as Governor, has not yet arrived. His arrival may lead to those who feel themselves in danger taking refuge in His Majesty's Consulate-General. Agha Nejeff appears to be working for the Shah, but his brother, Agha Norullah, publicly condemned one of the Shah's Proclamations as contrary to religion and freedom. Ekbal-ed-Dowleh's deputy reached Ispahan on the 19th July. On the 8th August he telegraphed to Tehran to his chief that a telegram from the chief priests at Nejeff had been put up at the entrance to a mosque. Its contents were that any man killed for the popular cause was equal to the martyrs of Kerbela. It was torn down by soldiers, but he feared that disturbances would ensue, and asked for more troops. Agha Norullah had from the pulpit urged the people to close their shops, but the Deputy-Governor warned the people by criers that any shops closed would be plundered by soldiers.

2. Six hundred Bakhtiari horsemen under Ali Merdan Khan, Salar Arfa, and Muin Homayoon left Deh Kurd for Tehran about the 9th. The Shah is said to have asked for 1,000 [*sic*] on a promise to remit three years' taxes.

Yezd.

1. The Intizam-ul-Mulk was removed from the Governorship, but reinstated on an appeal being made to the Shah by the people.

2. Since the end of June the Yezd-Nain road has again become unsafe, caravans and posts have been robbed, and the road is infested with numbers of mounted robbers. The entire postal service is disorganized, and the Governor is apparently doing nothing.

Seistan.

1. His Majesty's Consul reports that in the early part of June two more caravans with 80 and 1,000 men respectively passed through Seistan into Afghan territory. He adds that if his suggestion for joint preventive action by the Governments of India and Persia continues to be impracticable it seems likely that Seistan will remain an open door into Afghanistan for all who succeed in bringing arms into the country from the south.

2. A Russian, Feodoroff, arrived at Birjand on the 12th June, and left next day for Seistan. Dr. Kosminsky described him as lately from a University, and travelling on no particular duty. He expected him to remain three months in Seistan. He spoke Persian but not French, and came from Sarakhs via Khaf. At Kain he

gave himself out to be a doctor. He called on the Shankat-ul-Mulk and took many photographs.

3. His Majesty's Vice-Consul in Seistan states that M. Bravine on the 11th June informed him that Colonel Von der Flaas was coming as Military Attaché and not as Consul to relieve him, as he had always stated was the case.

4. There was no disturbance in either Seistan or Kaim as a result of the Shah's victory, which is generally regarded in those parts as a Russian triumph.

Kerman.

1. The Russian Consulate Mirza has managed to embroil his Consul with the new Governor, and relations are so strained that His Majesty's Consul says that in the event of the two Consuls taking joint action the Russian Consul would be unable to accompany him on a visit to the Governor. The Governor has complained to Tehran of the Russian Consul.

2. The Naih was stated to have surrendered to Asad-ed-Dowleh and to be in chains in Bam fort in the middle of July.

3. Serdar Motazid resigned the Governorship about the 15th July, as he was unable to send the Shah the money demanded from him. Sahib Ekhtiar is appointed Governor in his place.

4. On the 4th August Vali Khan, with 300 infantry, 80 cavalry, and one gun, left Kerman to assume the Governorship of Bam and Baluchistan.

Sultanabad.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul reported on the 6th June that there were six Political Societies each trying to govern the district, that the Governor was powerless, that the leaders of the Societies were intolerant priests who were trying to create an anti-European feeling, and that Messrs. Ziegler and Co., who had advanced money and wool to the value of 30,000*l.* to weavers, were finding it daily more difficult to collect outstandings.

Shiraz.

1. In the first week of July fifteen artillerymen took refuge in His Majesty's Consulate in order to obtain from the Persian Government their pay, which was one year in arrears. They were subsequently induced to leave under a promise of being paid. The Commander of the Chaharmahal Regiment also told His Majesty's Acting Consul that his men might have to take refuge with a similar object.

2. The fighting on the Bushire road between the villages of Kemarej and Daliki, discontinued while Zil-es-Sultan was Governor-General, broke out again on the 6th July. There is no hope of order on this road except under a strong Governor-General.

3. Though Shiraz has remained quiet, the Province of Fars is in a state of disorder, and robberies are reported from all sides. Kazeroon is in a state of siege, the contending leaders being Hayder Khan of Kamarej and Mirza Kazir Khan, late deputy Governor. The latter has since taken refuge at His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz. Between the 4th and 25th July the Tehran post was robbed four times by Arabs, and the Isfahan road is quite unsafe. The appointment of Asaf-ed-Dowleh as Governor-General was greeted with derision, the Shirazis recalling his previous effort to govern Shiraz. Serdar Firouz, Deputy Governor, arrived at Shiraz on the 16th July.

PERSIAN GULF.

Bushire.

1. The editor of the "Muzafferi" left for Bombay by steamer on the 29th June. Next day the Governor received orders from Tehran to execute him. The Governor also received orders from the Shah to keep a strict watch on members of Political Societies.

2. The importation of the Calcutta "Habl-ul-Matin" into Persia has been prohibited, and the Governor has seized all copies in Persian post-offices.

3. Several merchants have received telegraphic instructions from Shiraz not to forward goods, as trouble on the road is anticipated in connection with the change of Governors-General.

Bunder Abbas.

1. The Russian Consul, having been refused leave by his Legation to go to India, left on the 27th June for the Ginow Hills.

2. Three of the Russian Cossacks, who have been continually getting ill, left on the 27th May by Russian steamer for Odessa.

Lingah.

Mr. Brown, of Wönekhaus and Co., is said to have promised to levy a small fee on every package imported by his Company and to pay it over to the "Anjuman-i-Azad," a prominent member of which is the Russian Consular Agent, Sadid-es-Sultaneh. Mr. Brown has also given out that he has arranged with the National Bank of India at Aden for the issue and receipt of drafts and remittances.

Mohammerah.

A copy of a telegram from the priests of Nejef to Tehran, denouncing the opponents of the National Assembly as enemies of the faith, was recently shown to several people here, and sent to Bushire. The people of Mohammerah seem indifferent as to affairs at Tehran.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major,
Military Attache.

[30119]

No. 398.

Mr. Morling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 207.)

Sir,

Gulabek, August 12, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 193 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to report that M. Bizot, the Financial Adviser, was summoned to Bagh-i-Shah on the 6th instant to explain to the Prime Minister, in whose favour the title of Grand Vizier has been revived, the nature of his proposals for the reorganization of the Ministry of Finance. The result of the interview, which lasted over two hours, was discouraging. Two or three other Ministers besides Mushir-es-Sultaneh were present, and Amir Behadur Jang, who unites in his own person the two offices of Commander-in-chief ("Sepahsalar") and Minister of War, occasionally put in a momentary appearance. His contribution to the discussion never went beyond an urgent demand for money. It would be tedious to repeat in detail the account which M. Bizot gave me of his experiences, and it will suffice to say that, with the sole exception of Ala-es-Sultaneh, who arrived near the end of the discussion, the Ministers and courtiers present one and all used language which showed that they had expected to find in M. Bizot a second M. Naus, whose sole duty it was to find the means of raising money for them to squander.

Finally, however, M. Bizot managed to obtain a list of the "pressing needs" of the Persian Government. It ran as follows:—

	Tomanas.
Improvement of army, expenses of arsenal, purchase of tents, and other necessary military expenditure	500,000
Arrears of pay of troops and pay during current year, and uniforms for troops	500,000
Construction of frontier fortresses in Azerbaijan, Astara, Kermanshah, Seistan, and Baluchistan	300,000
Payment of pensions fallen in arrears on account of recent disorders	200,000
Balance of purchases—money of rifles, &c., ordered by the late Shah, and purchase of new rifles and cartridges	500,000
Total	2,000,000

Or, in round figures, 400,000*l.*, the amount of the joint advance contemplated in the end of 1907. As M. Bizot observed, when he showed it to me the next morning, this

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remarkable production was unmistakably the work of Amir Behadur Jang, into whose hands 1,800,000 toman out of 2,000,000 toman would pass. While M. Bizot was with me, Kavam-ed-Dowleh, the Minister of Finance, was announced, and at my suggestion M. Bizot remained during his visit. After a little skirmishing the Minister asked M. Bizot to produce the list, and inquired what I thought of it. I replied by asking his Excellency if he expected that I should take such a proposal seriously. The Persian Government were asking us to advance a considerable sum, of which nine-tenths was to be confided to Amir Behadur Jang without any sort of guarantee that it would be properly expended, while the remainder was to be wasted in paying fraudulent pensions. I was sure that my Government would never listen to such a proposal, even if I consented to submit it, which I was not prepared to do. To my mind the proposal was nothing but a foolish attempt on the part of Amir Behadur Jang and his friends to line their own pockets, just as they might have hoped to do in similar circumstances under the old régime. His Excellency must be aware that His Majesty's Government would never assent to assist the Persian Government to raise money for such a purpose. I was, I said, much disappointed at finding that the Persian Government clearly had no real intention of instituting reform in its finances. Kavam-ed-Dowleh was considerably disconcerted, and tried to argue that the Committee which M. Bizot was to form at the Department of Finance would prove an ample guarantee that the money, if advanced, would not be squandered. Having been told by M. Bizot just before Kavam-ed-Dowleh's arrival that his Excellency had proposed that three of the five seats on the Committee were to be occupied by the Minister and his two sons, I replied that I must be satisfied of the composition of the Committee before I could put much faith in it, and went on to ask why, if the Government really desired reform, no provision for the necessary expenditure it must entail appeared on the list of "pressing needs"; why, too, was there no mention of the payment of the salaries of the Persian Representatives abroad, which I had been told was a matter of such great urgency.

M. Bizot warmly supported my arguments, pointing out that he, as Financial Adviser, could never recommend the Minister to adopt such a list as the one furnished. Without details there could be no control over the expenditure. Did the Minister pretend that no other Department except the War Office had any pressing need for money? It was perfectly obvious that the list was drawn up without the smallest regard for the public interest. If the Persian Government expected to obtain any kind of assistance the Minister must aid him, M. Bizot, to ascertain how the financial position actually stands, and to draw up an accurate and detailed statement of the urgent wants of each Department.

Kavam-ed-Dowleh appeared to be somewhat downcast at the result of the interview, but M. Bizot assured me that his Excellency was perfectly aware that he had come on a fool's errand, and was probably only dismayed at the prospect of having to face Amir Behadur Jang and the Court camarilla with the confession of having achieved nothing.

M. de Hartwig, to whom I related the interview, seemed to me to be a little annoyed that I should have seen the "list" before himself, and to be less disposed than myself and the Financial Adviser to condemn it as unacceptable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30120] No. 399.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 208.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 12, 1908.

DURING the course of the official call which I paid to the new Turkish Ambassador, Nasonhi Bey, on the 6th instant, the Turkish Military Attaché, Djemil Bey, observed that the condition of affairs all over Persia, and particularly in Tabreez, was so serious that several of the foreign Representatives had expressed the desire to hold a meeting of the "Chefs de Mission" to discuss whether collective representation should not be made to the Shah. The Dutch Minister, who was present, appeared unwilling to express any opinion till I had given him a lead, and I therefore said that the state of Persia, with the one exception of Tabreez, was no worse than it had been at any time during the past eight months, and that I thought that there was no necessity for such a step. M. de Sturler expressed a general concurrence in this

view, and added that Dutch interests in Persia were so small that he would scarcely feel justified in agreeing to such a meeting until matters became very much worse. Djemil Bey, however, with the evident approval of his chief, whose French is too scanty to allow him to take part in any discussion carried on in that language, insisted on his point that a meeting was necessary, and intimated that, as there were two or three Ministers who desired it, the Ambassador, as doyen, would use his discretion as to summoning his colleagues for the purpose.

Three days later Djemil Bey called on me ostensibly in connection with an unimportant case in which British and Turkish interests are involved, and brought up the subject again. I asked him who were the Ministers who were so anxious to hold a meeting to discuss joint intervention, and he replied that the proposal originated with the Austro-Hungarian Minister. He went on to say that his chief had commissioned him to inquire what reply I should make should the Ottoman Ambassador issue a circular proposing a meeting. I said that as my attitude in regard to anything resembling collective intervention in Persian affairs had been made perfectly clear at the meeting of the 17th December (see my despatch No. 277 of the 30th December, 1907), I should reply that, as I saw no necessity for such action at present, I could not take part in a meeting of the Corps Diplomatique except on explicit instructions from my Government. I also pointed out to Djemil Bey how absurd it would be for the Turkish Embassy to take the lead in joint representations on humanitarian or any other grounds as regards the struggle going on in Tabreez, considering that Turkish troops had been ravaging Persian territory in the Urumia districts for the past year.

M. de Hartwig, to whom I mentioned the conversation which took place at the Ottoman Embassy, stated that he would absolutely decline to attend any meeting, and said that if the Turkish Ambassador should send out a circular to the "Chefs de Mission," he felt inclined to raise the question of the expediency of the Representative of a Mussulman Power acting as doyen in a Mussulman country. He saw great inconveniences in the arrangement, and was much inclined to dispute it. I expressed my general concurrence, but observed that if we successfully raised the question we might at some future period find ourselves with a doyen even less acceptable than the Ambassador, such, for instance, as the Austro-Hungarian Minister, whose sole idea of diplomacy seemed to be by collective action, and who, should he (M. de Hartwig) go on leave, would become acting doyen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30121] No. 400.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 209.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 182 of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, contrary to the understanding which had been arrived at that Zil-es-Sultan should leave Persia via Bushire, His Imperial Highness left Shiraz on the 7th July for Ispahan, where he arrived on the 14th.

I had endeavoured to convey a message to His Imperial Highness through His Majesty's Consuls at Shiraz and Ispahan, warning him that unless he left the country His Majesty's Government would be unable to afford protection for his family and property, and advising him to leave by the south, but His Imperial Highness travelled so rapidly by a route on which there are no telegraph stations that this communication could only be delivered to him a few stages from Ispahan.

Upon arrival there he informed His Majesty's Acting Consul-General that he would leave via the north, as he feared the long sea voyage from Bushire, and that he would start as soon as he had put the affairs of his family in order and settled the accounts of the Government of Fars. His Imperial Highness added that he had the Shah's permission to do this, which I subsequently learnt was correct.

None the less his presence at Ispahan for a protracted period would, I felt, have been a grave danger to the tranquillity of the country, and, with the concurrence of the Russian Minister, I informed His Imperial Highness, through His Majesty's Acting Consul-General, that His Majesty's Government would not feel themselves under any obligation to obtain guarantees for him if he prolonged his stay.

M. de Hartwig also instructed the Russian Consul-General at Ispahan to support Dr. Aganoor's representations. Some days later M. de Hartwig sent His Imperial

Highness a letter containing general assurances of a similar nature to those which have on various occasions been given to His Imperial Highness by His Majesty's Legation, and I thereupon informed him, as authorized in your telegram No. 196 of the 30th July, that we had been instructed to obtain guarantees from the Shah for the security of his family and property during his absence from Persia, and urged him not to delay his departure longer.

The Zil-es-Sultan has repeatedly expressed his fears that an attempt would be made on his life on his way through the country, and has begged that an official of this Legation might be allowed to accompany him. I cannot, however, believe that there is any ground for His Imperial Highness' anxiety; and, moreover, if a British official were sent to accompany him it might be interpreted as a sign that His Majesty's Government countenance his intrigues against the Shah, and I have therefore declined to assent, as reported in my telegram No. 264 of the 5th instant, unless the Russian Minister agreed to do the same.

M. de Hartwig, who shares my view that Zil-es-Sultan runs no risk of attack on his journey, was not unwilling to agree to sending some one to accompany him if this would accelerate His Imperial Highness' departure, but stated that he had no one whom he could send. His Excellency finally suggested that he might arrange with Colonel Liakhoff to send two Cossacks with him. I agreed to this proposal, though I fear it is not an arrangement which His Imperial Highness would have viewed with unmixed gratitude had it ever been put into execution. His Imperial Highness, however, left Ispahan before instructions reached the Russian Consul-General, and is due to arrive in Tehran on the 13th or 14th instant.

As regards the guarantees for His Imperial Highness' family and property, the Russian Minister and I approached the Minister for Foreign Affairs, from whom I have received a note, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation, to the effect that, in accordance with an order which has been issued by the Shah, in virtue of the close relations which exist between the Zil-es-Sultan and His Imperial Majesty, His Imperial Highness' property will remain in complete security, and that His Majesty's Legation may rest assured that the Persian Government will do all in their power to protect His Imperial Highness' interests. A copy of my letter to the Zil transmitting the above is also inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 400.

Mr. Marling to Zil-es-Sultan.

Your Imperial Highness,

Gulahak, August 12, 1908.

I DID not fail to communicate to my Government the message with which your Imperial Highness honoured me through His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, recalling the various assurances of friendly protection which His Britannic Majesty's Representatives have given to your Imperial Highness in the past, and requesting me to guarantee to your Imperial Highness the possession of your property and estates in the event of your leaving the country.

Your Imperial Highness may rest assured that the friendly sentiments of His Britannic Majesty's Government towards your person remain unaltered, inasmuch as I have been instructed by my Government to obtain from His Imperial Majesty the Shah assurances that during your Imperial Highness' absence from Persia your property and estates will be secure.

In pursuance of these instructions I have obtained from His Highness the Minister for Foreign Affairs a letter, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy for your Imperial Highness' information, conveying to me the tenor of the Imperial commands, which I venture to think should set your mind at rest in this matter.

The original of this document will be preserved in the archives of this Legation.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 2 in No. 400.

Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.

(Translation.)

Tehran, August 11, 1908.

I HAVE submitted to His Majesty the Shah the contents of your private note of the 30th July, 1908, respecting the security of the estates and property of His Imperial Highness the Zil-es-Sultan. In accordance with the order issued, I have the honour to inform you that, in view of the close relationship existing between His Imperial Highness and His Majesty the Shah, his property will be safe and the Persian Government will do their utmost to protect it. Your Excellency should rest perfectly assured on this point.

I avail, &c.
(Signed and sealed) ALA-ES-SULTANEH.

[30122]

No. 401.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 210.)

Gulahak, August 13, 1908.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith paraphrase of a telegram which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad regarding the attitude taken up by the great Mujtehedes at Nejed towards the present Constitutional struggle in this country. Although it must by now be well known in several of the chief towns of Persia that the sympathies of these high ecclesiastics lie entirely with the party of reform, there has as yet been no sign of any response to their denunciation of the Shah. Their apparent readiness to recognize the Sunni Sultan as the head of all Islam is also interesting.

A paraphrase of my reply to Major Ramsay is also inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 401.

Consul-General Ramsay to Mr. Marling.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bagdad, August 4, 1908.

A MESSAGE has been sent to me by the leading priests of Nejed to ask me the following questions:—

The priests wish to know whether the Persian Parliamentary party will have the support of His Majesty's Government, as they maintain it had when the grant of a Constitution was first made. Secondly, would I give them advice as to what line of conduct they should now follow?

The conduct of Russia and of the Russian Cossack officers during the recent events at Tehran has aroused great bitterness among the priests. The telegraph wire to Constantinople has been placed at their disposal, and they have been holding telegraphic conversations with that place. They have, I gathered, practically authorized the Sultan to occupy Azerbaijan, on the ground that the Shah has fired on a Mosque and Koran, and has expelled religious leaders, and that the Sultan is head of all Islam. The priests appear to be distracted by the difficulties of the situation, and probably doubt the wisdom of what they have done. Their anxiety is increased by the fact that they are now cut off from all communication with Tehran. In reply I said that to invite direct foreign intervention was to be deprecated, and that, moreover, I did not think that Russia would allow the Sultan to take Azerbaijan without a war. I added that there were few places where a Shi'ah could pray in Constantinople. In order to terminate the interview I then pleaded an engagement with the Vali.

[1599]

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The messenger will probably come to see me again to-morrow, and I should be glad if you could give me some news of events in Persian provinces, more especially Resht and Tabreez. Shall I tell the messenger that I am not authorized to discuss Persian politics, or do you wish me to adopt any particular line?

Inclosure 2 in No. 401.

Mr. Marling to Consul-General Ramsay.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Gulahek, August 6, 1908.

I RECEIVED your telegram of the 4th instant last night. The policy of His Majesty's Government in Persia is one of strict non-intervention, and the Legation at Tehran will do nothing to assist either party in the present struggle.

I believe that events will force the Shah to recall his Parliament, and I therefore consider the priests' message to Constantinople most ill-advised and unnecessary.

The revolutionaries are continuing the struggle at Tabreez, but Resht as well as the rest of Persia remains perfectly quiet, and the attitude of the people generally seems to be one of indifference.

[30123]

No. 402.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 211.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 13, 1908.

A DAY or two after the *coup d'état* of the 23rd June one or two persons of very respectable position who had taken a more or less prominent part during the days of the Medjliss came up for safety to Gulahek, and within ten days some twelve or fifteen others came to reside in the village, either in houses rented by themselves or in those of friends. Most of them arrived quite openly, though a few of the more timorous seem to have made their way up after dark. In one or two cases these persons had undoubtedly reason to fear for their lives, not indeed at the hands of the Court party, but on grounds of private vengeance, as, for instance, Moavin Hazret, the Judge who conducted the trial of the murderers of the Parsee merchant Fereidoon; the culprits in that case, as you will remember, were so savagely beaten that it was reported that two had died, but the rumour was untrue, and the men have since been pardoned and allowed to return to Tehran. Another of the refugees is known to have fought desperately on the side of the Nationalists, and to be threatened with vengeance by one of the Cossack brigade whose brother he is said to have killed. The remainder of the "refugees" had no particular object in seeking shelter in Gulahek beyond the wish to be safe from molestation. The rumours of arrests at this time were very exaggerated, but there can be no doubt that a considerable number were being effected nightly, and often on quite frivolous pretexts. To show how general the terror was I may mention that Meftah-es-Sultaneh, the head of the English section of the Foreign Office, was among the first arrivals in Gulahek. He admitted frankly that he was afraid to stay in town, and told me of two or three cases of arbitrary arrest which had come within his certain knowledge. "Certain knowledge" with a Persian means third hand report, and he confessed that he had really no proof of his stories, but only believed them to be true. He had not, however, ventured out of his house in Tehran for two days. "Like every one else," he said, "I belonged to an Anjuman and was not safe, but happily I have an English decoration, and when I ventured out to come to Gulahek I put it in my pocket to protect me," and he produced it for my inspection.

All these persons were quiet and well-behaved, and there was no reason for treating them differently from the ordinary summer visitors to Gulahek.

By the 14th ultimo the number of refugees had risen to over thirty, and in the next two days some thirty-five others arrived and took up their quarters in a garden rented by one of their number and adjoining the Legation grounds. Of this last batch, the majority had not come from Tehran, but from the districts north of Gulahek, where a few arrests had produced general alarm.

Up till then I could discover nothing to show that the refugees had any other motive than to remain in Gulahek until things should become normal again; they admitted that this condition would not obtain till the Medjliss was reinstated and

martial law suspended; but I am convinced that their flight to Gulahek was not prearranged, and that they had no thought of abusing their position for political purposes.

Meantime, however, there were whisperings in the bazaars of taking bast in the village of Gulahek and in the Legation grounds. The strict measures I had taken to prevent any access to the Legation in town had, of course, shown conclusively what our attitude was in the question of bast, and the intention obviously was to force our hands. But to guard against it, except by allowing the Persian Government to place pickets around the village—a proceeding which appeared to me to be quite inadmissible in view of recent events—was very difficult, or rather impossible with the slender resources at my disposal. Gulahek is an open village with seven or eight roads leading into it, and with thirteen men out of the twenty-one gholams and sowars—for the Persian police of the village are quite untrustworthy—employed on absolutely necessary duties, it was obviously impossible to guard every approach. An Indian sowar, moreover, as a stranger to the village, is of little use unless accompanied by a gholam. However, I put a gholam on duty on the main road leading into the village by which all the refugees had till then arrived, and instructed the "ketkhoda" to watch the other approaches. I had already done what I could to let it be known through the Bazaar Office of the Imperial Bank of Persia and other agents that there was nothing to be gained by an attempt to take bast at Gulahek, but that, on the contrary, any attempt to do so would be strongly resented, but, in spite of my efforts, the rumours of such an intention continued to gain strength, and it seemed to me that the only way to calm the popular agitation and so prevent a descent on Gulahek was that the Shah should be induced to give some unequivocal proof of his intention to abide by the Constitution, as, for instance, by reassembling the Medjliss at an early date. In this view the Minister for Foreign Affairs entirely concurred—indeed, he informed me that all the more moderate members of the Government had been constantly urging it on His Imperial Majesty.

Having received your general concurrence, provided I could secure the co-operation of the Russian Minister, I called on M. de Hartwig on the 20th ultimo and explained the position to him. I said that I was really apprehensive that the bazaar people might make an attempt to flock to Gulahek and even to force an entry into the Legation grounds. The people already in the village had come in circumstances which gave no possible pretext for expelling them; they had never asked the Legation to take any steps on their behalf, and I was satisfied that for the present they only desired to secure their personal safety. I had thought of trying to find out who was encouraging the notion which certainly existed in the bazaars of a general bast at Gulahek, but had discarded the proposal, as I felt sure that any attempt to get into touch with the leaders would almost certainly be looked on as a signal that the Legation was willing to take up the popular cause and bring about what I most wished to avert. Perhaps he (M. de Hartwig) could assist me to let it be known in the bazaars that the Legation would in no circumstances whatever give any countenance to such a movement.

M. de Hartwig received my remarks with very ill grace. It was perfectly simple to keep people out of Gulahek by asking the Persian Government to give me a sufficient force of police or soldiery to guard all the approaches to the village; as it was the revolutionaries were being encouraged to fly to us, even if they were not already being invited to do so, and the Minister mentioned Mr. Churchill's name, but stopped abruptly. I protested strongly against suspicions of this kind, which had no foundation whatever, but M. de Hartwig was off again on his favourite theme of attacking our attitude. There was, he said, nothing whatever to justify the fears of arrest of which I made so much; these people came solely for political purposes, and my inaction was encouraging them. It was true that a few arrests were being made, but these were non-political, and effected in the hope of capturing the band of ruffians who had committed so many crimes in Tehran during the spring. Did I intend to receive and protect, for instance, the men who broke into M. Ostrogradsky's house, or those who brought up bombs to kill Colonel Liakhoff? I said that if any civil criminals were in Gulahek, and the Persian Government notified me of the fact, I should follow the same course as he had in the case of Malek-et-Tujjar, namely, hand them over for trial in the presence of a member of the Legation. The allusion was not much relished by M. de Hartwig, who reverted to the refugees then in the village, and said that in similar circumstances he would forcibly clear the village of them. Why could not I do the same? I replied that Russian administrative powers were much more extensive than English, and I was sure His Majesty's Government would never allow me to act as he suggested so long as the visitors behaved like any other temporary resident. The Russian Minister took no pains to conceal his disbelief of my state-

ment, and then went off quite irreverently to defend the part played by Colonel Liakhoff in the recent *coup d'Etat*. He could, he said, see no difference between that officer's conduct and that, for instance, of General Williams or Admiral Hobart, who had taken part in the war against Russia, but without any protest being made by England. I said I could see no parallel whatever in the circumstances of the cases he mentioned with those of the present position, and then recalled him to the object of my visit, namely, how best to prevent the possibility of a large number of people from the bazaar suddenly attempting to enter Gulahek or even the Legation grounds. The latter eventually I should try my best to prevent by treating the refugees simply as trespassers and removing them by means of the police, but even this would be beyond my powers if they came in large numbers, as I feared might be the case. I had suggested to His Majesty's Government that the best, perhaps the only, means would be for the Shah to announce his intention of summoning the Medjliss at an early date, and His Majesty's Government had approved the suggestion, provided that I secured his co-operation. M. de Hartwig said that for the Shah to do so at present would be interpreted as a sign of weakness, and then the revolutionary elements would be encouraged to further resistance. His Imperial Majesty would have the appearance of yielding to pressure. I said that the pressure did not yet exist; we need make no parade of forcing our advice on His Imperial Majesty, and the act could appear to be spontaneous on his part. M. de Hartwig seemed to be more than half convinced, but finally said that so long as the struggle in Tabreez continued he would be most unwilling to urge on the Shah any action which would bear the appearance of irresolution.

A day or two later I learnt from the French Minister that M. de Hartwig had given him a most distorted account of our conversation, in which I was represented as having entirely declined to do anything to prevent the Nationalists from taking shelter in Gulahek, but had rather expressed my readiness to welcome them.

I have ventured to report this conversation at some length in order to show the difficulty of reasonable discussion with M. de Hartwig.

During the following week the uneasiness in Tehran continued. The special Tribunal sitting at Bagh-i-Shah was, and still is, occupied in investigating the attempt on the Shah's life of the 25th February, and every day a few individuals were carried off, apparently under arrest. Probably not one in twenty was detained after giving his evidence, but the mere fact that these arrests were taking place was sufficient to scare the timid Tehranis, and rumours became more disquieting. There were, however, no fresh arrivals. On the 27th and 28th about a dozen of the refugees in the garden were induced to leave by the unwearying efforts made by Abbas Kuli Khan, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Smart, and I hoped that these departures would prevent further arrivals.

On the evening of the 28th some 100 managed to enter the village after dark from the north-east, evading the men whom I had placed to watch the approaches. Although these people again professed to have come merely for security, I think it can scarcely be doubted that the news of the events in Turkey had encouraged them to attempt a further move, and that their motive was largely political. Every effort to convince them that they could safely return to town was again made, and on the 29th and 30th some 25 left; but late on the night of the 30th and very early on the following morning 180 fresh arrivals joined the party in the garden, which now amounted to nearly 300 souls. Their spokesman made no secret of their object; public meetings and assemblages of all kinds were forbidden by martial law in Tehran, and so they had decided to come to Gulahek, where they could discuss the political situation unmolested and communicate with their friends.

It was pointed out to them that the Legation could not allow the village of Gulahek to be used for purposes of this kind, and that in no circumstances whatever would they derive any benefit from remaining, and that if by their numbers they threatened to endanger the sanitary condition of the village they would be forcibly expelled. These arguments produced some effect, for the same morning about 100 left in a body, but only to take bast in the Turkish Embassy in Fairisch, where they were joined by fifty more the next day. No attempt had been made by the Persian Government to prevent this last batch from gaining sanctuary, but on the 2nd instant a few Cossacks were posted on the high road which passes on the west side of Gulahek, and three pickets were stationed near the Embassy. The weary efforts to induce the party in the garden at Gulahek to leave recommenced, and after hours spent in argument, expostulation, and even menaces of expulsion some effect was produced, and a large proportion of the "refugees" promised to leave the following day. That evening, however, seven armed Cossacks entered the village. They admitted to

Mr. Churchill, whom I sent to interrogate them, that they were acting without orders, and said that, as their officer was away, they would telephone to Tehran for instructions. They left the village the same night.

I informed Ala-es-Sultaneh in a semi-official letter of the incident, reminding him of the special privileges the Legation enjoys in Gulahek, and requesting him to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future. I added that the presence of these men at that moment was specially regrettable as it would make it more difficult for me to persuade the "refugees" in the village to depart, as they would now pretend that they were liable to arrest. My letter was at once sent by Ala-es-Sultaneh to Bagh-i-Shah, with the result that a Persian officer of the brigade was dispatched to Gulahek to obtain the names of the offending Cossacks, and I understand that the men were subsequently punished. When I saw Ala-es-Sultaneh the following day I thanked him for the prompt action he had taken, and said I would consider the incident as closed.

The mischief, however, has been done, for five persons, who had till then been living with friends in the village, managed to enter the Legation grounds. These latter, whose terrors are not entirely unjustified, were at first beyond the reach of argument, and even the threat of forcible removal produced no effect on them. One or two of them even professed that they preferred immediate death to the miseries of suspense if expelled, and would commit suicide. Nothing could persuade these timid souls that the village was not raided nightly by Cossacks thirsting for vengeance. Finally, however, Meftah-es-Sultaneh induced the individual who believed himself to be most seriously compromised to accept a Rescript of the Shah's, written on a letter from Sepahdar to Mr. Churchill about his case, as a sufficient guarantee. This man, Muntasser-ed-Dowleh, had particularly distinguished himself in the defence of the Medjliss on the 23rd June, and feared that the Cossacks would revenge themselves on him. He is in the service of Sepahdar, who interested himself to obtain permission to take him with him to Tabreez, whither he was about to depart in command of the Royalist troops. Muntasser eventually joined his camp train at Kazvin in safety, and at once began to brag that he would never allow Sepahdar to attack the Nationalists, or, if he did, would fight against him himself. The other four, under the strongest pressure, were at last induced to return to their houses in the village.

The appearance of the Cossacks had a similar effect on the party in the garden, which then numbered 144. Explanations, persuasion, expostulation, taunts, and finally open threats of coercion were wasted. In the garden they were safe, they said, outside of it, even in the village, they were in danger; they were also quite convinced that they would never be expelled by force, a belief which was naturally confirmed so long as the warning that force might be employed to remove them was not carried into effect. In the circumstances it appeared imperative to employ coercion, firstly, because it was clear that until the illusion that the Legation was not empowered to have recourse to force was dispelled the "refugees" would decline to leave; and, secondly, because nothing was better calculated to avert the future possibility of bast than an unequivocal proof that the Legation would not permit its exceptional position in Gulahek to be abused for political reasons. There were, of course, some inevitable disadvantages, e.g., that we should incur, for a time at all events, considerable unpopularity, and that it would be represented that the Legation had yielded to the insistence of the Shah. The legality of expelling the refugees from a private garden hired by one of them also seemed open to question, for it could not be seriously pretended that their presence was likely to cause any disturbance of the peace. But the point is not one which would attract attention in Persia, though it might give rise to embarrassing comment in England.

The receipt of your telegram No. 199, authorizing me to apply to the Persian Government for a sufficient police force to clear the garden, entirely altered the situation, and a few hours 132 out of 144 of the refugees had taken their departure. The remaining twelve, however, were obdurate, and one at all events, in Mr. Smart's presence, made demonstration of his determination not to fall into the Shah's hands by swallowing a dose of opium large enough to kill him. The man was at once medically treated, and is little the worse for his folly. Though this is a usual Persian device to compel pity, and need not be taken too seriously, it indicates that the pretended suicide has worked himself up to the last pitch of resolution. I therefore thought it better not to resort to force in the case of these men. Indeed I did not think it would be entirely justifiable, inasmuch as all twelve were among the first arrivals in the garden, and had, to the best of my belief, been driven to seek refuge in Gulahek solely by their fears. I was relieved of further trouble in the matter by the assistance of

Meftah-es-Sultaneh who, with my permission, offered to use his influence to induce the men to go. After a long interview with them he arranged to obtain a Rescript from the Shah, a copy of which would be given to each individual. As this arrangement appeared to me to be preferable to forcible expulsion and its attendant unpopularity I agreed to it, and the men finally left the garden on the 11th instant.

The bastis at the Turkish Embassy remained there until the 6th instant, and only consented to depart when each had been furnished with a paper of amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30124]

No. 403.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 212.)

Sir,

Gulabek, August 13, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 204 of yesterday's date, and in amplification of the reply contained in my telegram No. 272 of to-day, I beg to state that I am convinced by my personal knowledge of Captain Lorimer that there is no danger whatever in authorizing him to travel off the main routes in his district at his discretion. I am confident that Captain Lorimer would not persist in penetrating into any of the less frequented regions without feeling satisfied in regard to the arrangements made for his personal security. As one of many instances which have led me to rely upon Captain Lorimer's judgment and freedom from impetuosity, I may mention the fact that when recently travelling from Ahwaz to Ispahan, via Shuster and Dizful, he prudently abandoned, owing to the dangerous state of the country for one day's march out of Dizful, his intention of entering Pusht-i-Kuh, a region regarding which he has for some years past been most anxious to collect first hand political and geographical information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30125]

No. 404.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 213.)

Sir,

Gulabek, August 13, 1908.

THERE has been no very marked change in the internal political situation during the past month, but what little alteration has taken place is not to the advantage of the reactionary party. The Shah himself is described as being exceedingly apprehensive for his personal safety, and to render himself more secure has summoned to his camp at Bagh-i-Shah some thousands of fighting tribesmen, Bakhtiari, Kakhors, &c., and the numbers of the Cossacks have also been raised and practically all the more modern artillery has been placed at Colonel Liakhoff's orders. The loyalty of the tribal forces is, however, uncertain. They have been attracted to Tehran by the prospects of unlimited plunder and are not a little discontented at finding that not only are their services not required for this purpose here, but that if there is any loot to be had it is at Tabreez, and then only after hard fighting. Their presence in Tehran is none the less of service to the Shah as it terrorizes the city. On the other hand, the want of money makes it doubtful how long His Majesty will be able to retain them, and as soon as they realize that there is no money and no prospect of plunder they may return to their homes, as one party of Bakhtiari is said to have done already. Meantime they are a source of some anxiety to Colonel Liakhoff, who is obliged to take stringent measures to restrain them from creating disturbances in the town.

With his usual shortsightedness the Shah has done nothing to prepare the way for a return to the Constitutional régime in conditions agreeable to himself. It is said, indeed, that one or two ex-Ministers and Deputies are engaged in drawing up a new electoral law, and in framing regulations for the appointment of a Senate, the creation of law courts, &c., but no result is so far apparent, and as the time is growing short before the promised convocation of the Medjliss the general disbelief in the Shah's pledges steadily increases. His Majesty's personal activity has been

largely centred in the inquiry into the attempt on his life last February and in such incidents, all of minor importance, as Zil-es-Sultan's movements, the bastis at the Turkish Embassy, and a handful of insignificant agitators who spent a week in the village of Gulabek, while his advisers have had such attention as they can spare from their own personal interests turned towards the struggle at Tabreez; indeed, unless the fact that despite the manifold reports to the contrary, no further executions have taken place is to be taken as a proof of it, no one at Bagh-i-Shah seems to have given a thought to the necessity of taking some steps towards conciliating public opinion. On the contrary, there is an evident desire to attempt to evade the Shah's promise to summon Parliament, for efforts have been made to organize spurious petitions both in the capital and provincial towns, representing that the nation has no desire for a Medjliss, and praying the Shah to abolish it. I hear, however, that since the receipt of the news of the recall of the Turkish Chamber of Deputies, the project has been abandoned.

At Bagh-i-Shah there is no sign of any settled policy, but it seems clear that the Shah is much less inclined to rely on the Russian party than heretofore and to have taken Amir Behadur Jang as his chief adviser. Possibly it has been intimated to His Majesty that Colonel Liakhoff went beyond the wishes of his Government in attacking the Medjliss and Mosque on the 23rd June, and that in the future he will have to confine himself strictly to the defence of the Shah's person. But whether this surmise is correct or not, it is unquestionable that Amir Behadur Jang and a small clique of courtiers, such as Ali Khan and Heshmet-ed-Dowleh, are for the present all powerful. Under the influence of this camarilla, the old order of things had been re-established, and Ministers are mere cyphers, or rather, as witness the reception given to M. Bizot's proposals for financial reform, passive instruments to carry out the selfish interests of the powerful courtiers who, and especially Amir Behadur Jang, are unquestionably making considerable sums of money by the time-honoured Persian methods. Their object is naturally to prolong the existing state of affairs as long as possible, and they look forward with dismay to the possibility of the resumption of the constitutional régime, which would seriously curtail their opportunities of gain, and which they are making every effort to prevent.

Among those who, though of the Shah's party, are included in this privileged circle, there evidently exists considerable mistrust as to what the future will bring forth. Thus Assef-ed-Dowleh and Ekbal-ed-Dowleh, the newly appointed Governors of Fars and Isfahan, have shown the greatest reluctance to take up their posts, while Sepahdar—whose loyalty must have been severely tried by the arbitrary cancellation of his lucrative contract for farming the telegraph system—and Ain-ed-Dowleh are still loitering on their way to Tabreez, where, as Military Commander and Governor respectively, they are to restore order in the Shah's name. The same unwillingness pervades the troops, and even a party of Cossacks sent from Urmia to Tabreez in the beginning of July, refused to attack the Nationalists. On the other hand, the popular party has not recovered from the shock of the *coup d'Etat*. Its quiescence is to a great extent explained by the absence of its real leaders, who are either in hiding or have fled abroad; while the few men of weight and position in the country who honestly sympathize with the reform movement are too conscious that Persia is not yet ripe for self-government to be ready to risk their freedom by premature action.

Thus then though the feeling against absolutism is by no means dead, and in spite of the encouragement derived from the news of recent events in Turkey, there had been no attempt at any serious movement. It will, however, be curious to note the effect of the declaration made by the Mujtaheds of Nejed in favour of Constitutionalism. The news has but just begun to reach the public, and so far has fallen rather flat, but well informed persons are inclined to believe that when the knowledge that the spiritual chiefs of the Shi'ahs have pronounced against the Shah, becomes general, the fanaticism of the nation will be roused irresistibly. In my own opinion, much depends on the capacity of the Shah to make himself master of Tabreez.

The somewhat disconnected telegrams which I received from Mr. Vice-Consul Stevens appear on the whole to confirm the reports current here that the struggle there has in great measure lost its original constitutional character, and is degenerating into a faction fight in which the parties on either side are inspired as much by private as by political interests. But be this as it may, it is beyond question that should the forces, nominally fighting on behalf of the Shah, be definitively worsted, the result would be hailed as a triumph for the Nationalist party, and a great impetus would be given to

their cause throughout the country. In fact, the immediate future depends on the issue of the struggle in that city. How the conflict will end is impossible to predict. The Shah is making a great effort to overwhelm opposition by hurrying up reinforcements, but the troops appear to be lukewarm and their leaders half-hearted; while the opposite faction, though hard pressed, is encouraged by vague promises of succour from Turkey.

The rest of Persia appears to be indifferent, and it is quite probable that were the Shah giving any proof of capacity to govern, the bulk of the nation would acquiesce for a time in a return to absolutism. Unfortunately for him, he has not done so; disorders and insecurity are already commencing in Fars, on the Isfahan-Yezd road, and in the neighbourhood of Bam and Regan, and this will in all probability redound to his discredit.

On the whole, then, the Shah's fortunes appear to be precarious, and it is unfortunate for him that, while he is entirely deficient in the qualities requisite to deal with the difficult situation in which he has placed himself, he has been able to find no better adviser than Amir Behadur Jang, a man whose aims are wholly selfish, and whose only recommendation is the reputation for recklessness, which, in Persia, often passes for resolution. His advice to the Shah will certainly be to disregard his pledges to summon a new Medjliss, and there can be no doubt that the advice would be congenial to his master. But should the Shah follow it, and should the three months pass without orders being issued for new elections, it is more than probable that an attempt will be made by the popular party in Tehran to appeal to this Legation, and, perhaps, even to all the foreign Missions, to bring pressure to bear on His Majesty to fulfil his promises. In one way or another, therefore, it seems inevitable that a new Medjliss will meet before the end of the year, but even so, I doubt whether the state of Persia will be thereby sensibly bettered. If the Shah is able to secure the return of subservient Deputies, the new Parliament will only serve to sanction the re-establishment for a time of the old state of affairs which originally led to the constitutional movement; while, on the other hand, if the elections are free, they are likely to result in the return of a House as hostile to His Majesty as the last, but without the support of the Anjumens to make its opposition effective. In neither case will the cause of reform be forwarded.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30126]

No. 405.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 214.)

Sir,

Gulshah, August 13, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches, the one a despatch from Major Cox forwarding the observations of His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz on the tentative scheme put forward by His Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah for the opening up of a trade route from Mohammerah to Kermanshah via Dizful and Pusht-i-Kuh (see my despatch No. 42 of the 28th February last), and the other containing Captain Haworth's reply to these criticisms and his present views on the subject. Captains Haworth and Lorimer have both recently been to Tehran to have their teeth attended to, and as their visits overlapped they had the advantage of exchanging their views on the suggested route.

2. You will observe that when Captain Haworth put forward his original scheme his object was to divert the trade entering Western Persia from its present route via Bagdad to one which appears to be a more natural one for geographical reasons, which would be entirely within Persian territory and might be brought to a very large extent under British control. He was, however, then unaware of the Concession held by the Persian Transport Company for the Luristan road via Dizful-Khorremabad and Burujird, which, besides possessing the advantages already cited for the Pusht-i-Kuh road, is 120 miles shorter from the sea to the capital and taps several important existing distributing centres.

3. Apart from this it is, I venture to think, open to doubt whether an endeavour to divert the very considerable trade entering Western Persia by way of Bagdad is in itself desirable owing to the great benefit enjoyed therefrom by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company. Be that as it may, I am unable entirely to share Captain Haworth's optimism in regard to the immediate success of the new route at

the expense of that via Bagdad. A not unfair analogy may be found in the Bakhtiari road which, in spite of its undoubted advantages and the great things predicted for it, has not found general favour as an alternative to the long and arduous Bushire-Shiraz route. This has no doubt been due to the difficulty of attracting muleteers from the old to the new road and it may not unfairly be urged that the Persian Transport Company have not taken full advantage of their opportunities; nevertheless there is a close parallel between the two cases and it would, in my opinion, be imprudent entirely to disregard Messrs. Lynch's experiences or to assume that the difficulties they encountered will not recur elsewhere.

4. Captain Haworth is, I think, now impressed with the superior advantages of the direct Luristan route, and I consider that, before falling back on the Pusht-i-Kuh route in default of a better, it would be as well to adopt Captain Haworth's suggestion, and see if personal pressure exercised locally by a Consular officer and a harrying of local dignitaries by the Central Government stimulated by the Legation, will reveal any chance of opening up the Luristan road. Captain Haworth is now on his way to Hamadan, a most important trade centre which he has as yet lacked opportunity to study, and when he leaves Hamadan I propose, subject to your approval, to authorize him to proceed to Khorremabad and remain there some two or three months (unless his presence be urgently required at Kermanshah), in order to "tâter le terrain." Should Captain Lorimer pass through Dizful on his way either to Ahwaz or Pusht-i-Kuh he might be instructed to execute a similar manœuvre from the southern end of the disturbed area.

5. It should in this way be possible to estimate pretty accurately the chances of opening up this road; but, in order to take full advantage of any amelioration in the situation, it would be most desirable that an engineer officer with special experience of mule tracks and their requirements should be available to repair immediately to the spot, and conduct a survey should the Consuls report favourably: and I venture to suggest the advisability of approaching the Indian Government in this sense.

6. I confess to some diffidence in putting forward any definite suggestions, in view of the information you were good enough to convey to me in your telegram No. 195 of the 29th July to the effect that the Russian Government have agreed in principle to the construction of a railway from Julfa to Mohammerah. It stands to reason that such an undertaking overshadows all road-building projects in the regions to be traversed by the railway, but, in default of information as to the precise nature of the railway scheme and the approximate date of its execution, I have thought it my duty to lay before you the conclusions to which a consideration of Captain Haworth's project and its attendant circumstances have led me.

7. In conclusion, I take leave to draw special attention to the stress Captain Haworth rightly lays on the importance of British and Indian trade entering Persia via Bagdad and Kermanshah, the volume of which is increasing steadily and at a greater proportional rate than that entering by the Gulf ports, which it indeed exceeds. The figures given may advantageously be read in conjunction with the account of German commercial efforts in the Kermanshah neighbourhood, which forms the subject of my despatch No. 215 of to-day's date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 405.

Consul-General Cox to Mr. Marling.

(No. 49. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, March 29, 1908.

IN continuation of my letter No. 37, dated the 5th January, 1908, I have the honour to forward, for your information, copies of further correspondence on the subject of communication from Ahwaz northwards.

In the meanwhile, at the desire of the Government of India, Captain Haworth has been instructed to submit definite detailed estimates of expenditure which will be entailed by the opening of sample rooms at Kermanshah and Hamadan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General for Fars. &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 405.

Vice-Consul Lorimer to Consul-General Cox.

(No. 110. Confidential.)

Sir,

Ahwaz, March 3, 1908.

IN compliance with your letter No. 39, dated the 5th January, 1908, I have the honour to forward (inclosed) some comments on the scheme proposed by His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah for the opening of a trade route between Mohammerah and Kermanshah, and the creation of a subsidized transport corps to work on it.

2. His Britannic Majesty's Consul has no doubt made a much more precise examination of the question than I have had an opportunity of doing, particularly in regard to the present position held by British goods in the market to the north of the line connecting Kermanshah and Burujird or Khurramabad, and in regard to the distance to which a route reaching Kermanshah in 20 stages from Ahwaz would advance the point at which the price of goods entering the country from the north and the south respectively balances.

I therefore do not attempt to discuss these questions, which lie at the base of the whole scheme considered from a financial point of view. My comments refer merely to the working details of the scheme under reference, and it is needless to point out that any scheme for working a route through from Dizful to the north must of necessity present many features or details which are open to criticism.

The success of any undertaking of the kind would depend largely on the way in which it was set on foot and on the practical management of it when once started.

3. I forward (attached) the copy of Captain Haworth's despatch, marked to facilitate reference, and shall be glad if it be returned to me later.

I regret the unavoidable delay which has occurred in dealing with these papers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, *Captain, Indian Army,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for
Arabistan.

Inclosure 3 in No. 405.

Comments by Vice-Consul Lorimer on Letter No. 55 G. from Consul Haworth to Consul-General Cox.

THE Persian Transport Company hold the Concession for the road from Ahwaz to Tehran via Khurramabad, and this, under the provisions of the Anglo-Russian Agreement, remains undisturbed by it.

2. Water is a difficulty. Qaid Khani, the Wali's agent, once detailed to me eleven stages between Dizful and Dehbalah. With one exception he gave them all as 6 farsakhs in length. This gives no certain criterion as to distance, but it does as to time, and marches of more than 6 farsakhs would not be advisable.

As a permanent route for large caravans water supply would probably assert itself as a determining factor in the fixing of the stages.

3. Sight is apparently lost of the fact that there is a large smuggling trade between Pusht-i-Kuh and Amara.

4. Doubtful whether muleteers would be got to work on the last section. From Shuster downwards practically all goods are carried by water, and I have never known of any being carried between Ahwaz and Mohammerah by land.

It is apparently contemplated that caravans should proceed between Dizful and Ahwaz by way of Shuster. This, indeed, is the only route possible under present circumstances, but the direct route from Dizful to Ahwaz between the Diz and Karkha Rivers does not much exceed half the length of that via Shuster. As regards the latter, there is a doomed bridge to be crossed before entering Dizful and a difficult ferry before entering Shuster. The intervening couple of stages are commonly unsafe during the hot weather, and sometimes in the cold weather, owing to Arab and Lur robbers.

5. Making allowances for all conditions, I think it should be possible to erect such caravanserais and forts as would be necessary, in the first instance, for less than 3,000 tomans a-piece.

6. Is it known that the construction of water reservoirs where required is feasible?

7. Timber might be available in the neighbourhood of Dizful, but nowhere else on this side, and such convenient timber as that of the poplar would not be found. Conditions in this respect are quite different from those of Upper Persia.

8. The Karkha is fordable in summer and on until the first rains at least. At present it is crossed in winter by skin rafts. Anything in the nature of a bridge would require protection.

Also, perhaps, the river would be too swift and too liable to heavy flooding to permit of anything of the nature of a swinging bridge. But on this I cannot speak with any certainty.

9. The storing and issue of supplies will be very big business, and it is scarcely possible to imagine that it will be satisfactorily run through the medium of Persians unless there is very adequate supervision. What undertakings would Shawal Levi give, and what guarantee as to prices and the honesty of his agents?

10. The Wali is very keen, if not on a road, at least on having relations with us, witness the correspondence which I had with him, and the statements of Qaid Khani in regard to my proposal for the use of the Saimarra route.

All arrangements which had to be made with him should be settled by direct negotiation between us and him, and we should not be dependent in such matters on the influence or services of a Jew.

11. What is it estimated that the royalty would have to amount to? Of course the less traffic the higher it would have to be, and this might lead to an excessive rate being fixed in the first instance, when the traffic on the road was problematic. The principle is sound, if properly regulated in practice.

Who would collect the royalty, and how and where would it be collected? The collection if solely in the hands of the Wali's people might be abused.

12. Yes, this is so.

13. With whom would the Vice-Consul, Ahwaz, make similar arrangements for the two stages into Dizful? the most unsettled part of Persia. In discussing the Saimarra route with the Wali, I insisted on his being responsible right up to Dizful.

These two stages are a problem in themselves, and though I am myself committed to maintaining that it is soluable, still I look for the solution in working it in as an integral part of some larger scheme, and not in isolating it, which would entail expensive treatment.

14. I do not think that I catch the drift.

15. See above. At present in practice the land route is never used even to save delay.

16. No allowance is made in this estimate for practical difficulties. It is only seventeen or eighteen stages from Ahwaz to Ispahan but goods seldom get up in less than a month, and often take much longer. Whatever the arrangement, it would be impossible to have mules always ready to dispatch with goods as they reached Ahwaz.

17. I much doubt whether the expense per mule could be kept down to 80 krans.

The average rate of contract hire for the seventeen stages, from Ahwaz to Ispahan, was, during 1907, 3.90 krans per Shahi man of 13½ lbs.

The maximum and minimum rates were 5.50 krans and 3 krans respectively. These rates cover a 5-kran toll paid by the muleteers on each mule. Taking the average load at 20 man (270 lbs.), which is below the mark, the average rate per mule works out at 78 krans.

18. The rate of 80 krans for twenty marches would be less by 12.82 per cent. than the above stated average on the Ispahan road; there would, further, be ferry dues and the royalty to the Wali to be paid, and supplies would have to be bought at a sufficiently enhanced price to allow a profit sufficient to cover the pay of a considerable staff, and the proper upkeep of a large number of caravanserais. On the Ispahan road there is only the 5 krans per mule bridge toll, and the farm of six caravanserais at an average of about 200 tomans a-year each. The fact that the caravanserais are practically uninhabitable, does not affect this aspect of the question.

I doubt whether a subsidy of 200 rupees a-month would make much appreciable difference. If the mules are few, the protective arrangement will entail a heavy charge on each mule; if the mules are numerous the subsidy will amount to a very small sum per head.

19. The users of the road would be almost entirely muleteers, who would only pay for the use of rooms under extreme stress of weather. All profits on so-called remunerative works and operations, including the profit made on the sale of grain, &c., would have to come out of the trade eventually. They would, of course, simply mean an equivalent increase in the rates of mule hire. I also imagine that little if any profits would find their way past the parties to whom the provision of the supplies was intrusted. But this would depend on the supervision exercised.

20. Who is going to keep effective control over the native agents, and who is going to run the subsidized Transport Corps? I do not think a scheme of this sort could be run without close and capable European supervision, or rather direction.

Muleteers always require considerable advances of money, and frequently do not come up to the scratch; who is going to fight for the recovery of advances when such becomes necessary?

21. How are the takings going to find their way into our hands, and who is going to superintend their collection on the spot at the caravanserais?

22. It would be difficult to secure trustworthy men down in this part of the country for this, or for any pay, but I might be able to lay my hands on possible men if some permanency of employment were guaranteed.

23. Goods do not arrive in equal consignments at equal intervals. If goods are to be forwarded promptly, the number of mules maintained must be in considerable excess of the theoretical requirements.

24. Points of expense to be kept in mind are: Payment of caravansaraidars; maintenance of sarais, bridge, &c.; protection charges between Pusht-i-Kuh and Dizful, also possibly between Dizful and Ahwaz. There is also the question of working capital to be provided for the initial purchase of stocks of grain and fodder, for advances to muleteers, and for payment of staff, until such time as the accumulated profits of the undertaking were adequate to meet these needs.

25. How long would it take for the bank receipts to reach the agent at the shipping port?

Granted its financial feasibility, the main difficulties of the scheme appear to me to be:—

The provision of suitable native agents, on whose trustworthiness and capability its success would largely depend;

The provision of adequate European supervision over the large geographical area covered by the operations proposed.

(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, *Captain, Indian Army,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for
Arabistan.

Ahwaz, March 3, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 405.

Vice-Consul Lorimer to Consul-General Cox.

(No. 114. Confidential.)

Sir,

Ahwaz, March 4, 1908.

IN continuation of my letter No. 110 of yesterday's date, in which I find that I omitted to refer to your own letter, I have the honour to express my entire agreement with the general argument of that letter, that it is highly desirable that we should secure our influence and trade by opening up a route from Dizful to the north, and that, in comparison with the importance of the main object, the question of the exact route to be adopted is of lesser moment.

2. The Pusht-i-Kuh-Kermanshah route considered on its merits is certainly the least advantageous from a commercial point of view, as it lies a long way off the most direct route to the considerable markets of Burujird, Hamadan, &c., and the ultimate objective Tehran, and could itself be reached in fewer stages via Khurramabad than via Behbala. On the other hand, it would secure us a dominating influence in Pusht-i-Kuh, and would have a considerable value as a trade route, even if only giving access to the Kermanshah market.

3. Connection with Khurramabad could be established, as you remark, from some point on its course, which is practically the Saimarra scheme, and such road-making or

other work as might be desirable could be effected through the medium of the local tribes. The result would still fall far short of a direct line of communication between Dizful and Khurramabad, but the latter seems unlikely ever to be taken up, and there is nothing to be gained by remaining indefinitely in contemplation of it to the exclusion of all alternatives. I would on these grounds support the proposal to open up the Dizful-Dehbalah-Kermanshah route.

4. It would not, I am afraid, be possible to enlist the Sardar Mukarram's interest in a road lying entirely within Pusht-i-Kuh territory, as it is not clear what he would stand to gain by it, but any connection through Luristan would probably offer attractions to him. His affairs have been passing through a severe crisis, but he appears to have succeeded in retaining his footing, and in any case I believe that the Saimarra route could always be carried through so long as the Fath-us-Sultan was to the fore, and that it would tend to make his relations with the Representatives of the Persian Government more stable.

5. The project under reference having to be worked under the name of the Persian Transport Company, I entirely agree with your view of treating the Company as "a man of straw." The "Lynch" Companies are in my opinion quite incapable of carrying through such an undertaking.

I have, &c.

(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, *Captain, Indian Army,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for
Arabistan.

Inclosure 5 in No. 405.

Consul-General Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, March 29, 1908.

IN continuation of my letter dated the 29th December, 1907, I have the honour to forward copies of the letters, with accompaniments, which I have received from Captain D. L. R. Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, in comment of the suggestions submitted by Captain Haworth, His Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah, for the opening up of communications from Ahwaz northwards.

I am sending copies to the latter and to His Majesty's Legation, and on receipt of Captain Haworth's further observations after seeing my comment of the 29th December and Captain Lorimer's present letters, shall address the Government of India again.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, *Major,*
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Inclosure 6 in No. 405.

Consul Haworth to Mr. Marling.

(No. 19 c.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 11, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copies of two letters, dated respectively the 6th and 10th August, 1908, addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, with reference to the improvement of communications for trade between the centre and the south of Persia, together with duplicate copies.

I have, &c.

(Signed) L. HAWORTH, *Captain,*
His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah.

Inclosure 7 in No. 405.

Consul Haworth to Consul-General Cox.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Kermanshah, August 6, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your indorsement dated the 29th March, 1908, forwarding a copy of Captain Lorimer's criticisms on my scheme for the improvement of the Pusht-i-kuh route in the interests of British trade.

[1599]

3 X

In submitting that Report, my idea throughout was competition with the Bagdad route, and Captain Lorimer's remarks, in so far as they are criticisms of my scheme, do not hold when regarded in the light of that competition. Let me give an instance. Captain Lorimer states that if the caravanserai were remunerative works, the fact that the muleteers would have to pay for their accommodation would increase the cost of the rates of transport. This is not correct; the muleteer already pays all such charges out of the rates quoted for the Bagdad road, and would do so equally from those quoted for the new road. If Captain Lorimer's objections are taken in the above light, it will be seen that, with the exception of one case, they fall to the ground.

If the last paragraph but one of my letter be read again, it will be seen that I submit a *prima facie* case, on which I ask the general opinion of the Government before proceeding further; to do more than this would first mean the examination of the road by an expert, and to this point I return at the end of my letter, in stating what appears to me to be the action required to be taken.

There is, however, no doubt that the road charges would be some krans per mule more expensive than my original estimate. I have allowed but 21 krans as the maximum per ton for the rates on the River Karun, whereas I find that Messrs. Lynch's charges are at present 11s. 5d. a-ton, equal, at the rate of exchange I have assumed throughout, to 28½ krans; thus, allowing as before six mules to the ton, we must allow 4¼ krans per mule-load in place of the maximum of 3½ formerly stated.

One of Captain Lorimer's objections also is sound, the royalty must be added to the cost of the route, and it is therefore necessary to get some idea of what this is likely to amount to.

As far as I can find out taking mules, camels, and donkeys some 70,000 to 80,000 loads arrive yearly along the Bagdad route; if the new road is to be a success the greater part of this must be deflected, let us say 50,000 loads.

I calculate that 100 Sowars should be sufficient to protect the road, and allowing 8 tomans per mensem to each Sowar we should reach a total of 9,600 tomans for the 100, if we had to pay them directly ourselves. This would necessitate a royalty of 2 krans per mule which is a very high rate. The Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh, however, is obliged to keep up his Sowars at all times, and there is little doubt that on coming to details he would only be too glad to take over the duties for half the sum I have named for the equivalent of 1,000l. a-year. This would entail a royalty of 1 kran per mule at which, I think, we may leave the rate without risk of under-estimation.

The above statement leaves the question somewhat undecided, but it must be remembered that the point would be definitely settled by reference to the Wali as soon as I had instruction to put the matter on a fixed basis for final decision.

We have to add then 1½ krans to my former estimate on account of the Karun River and at least 1 kran for the royalty or 2½ krans per mule in all. On the other hand, while I took 70 krans as the rate per mule from Bagdad to Kermanshah the rates this year have varied from 85 to 135 krans, giving an average of 110 krans per mule; similarly whereas I have allowed 32s. 6d. per ton from Bagdad the rate this year has varied from 30s. to 50s. giving an average rate of 40s. per ton. It will be seen that the rates which were allowed for comparison were greatly to the advantage of the Bagdad route.

The chief difficulty in putting up a scheme of this description with such varying rates is to get a basis of comparison, the only thing to be done is to give the general figures and in comparing to allow a margin for safety. It remains, however, sufficiently clear that the difference of cost between the two roads would be little if anything, any possible advantage lying with the new route, while the immense difference in time, absence of irregular charges and of transit dues would all be in favour of the Pusht-i-Kuh road.

I have come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to treat my suggestions for agents and for a subsidized transport service separately; putting the three schemes together is apt to produce an idea of a complicated system which in reality does not exist, for the three schemes, though complementary, are absolutely distinct and do not depend the one on the other in any way.

To revert to Captain Lorimer's objections, to answer each of these separately would demand a long letter in itself, and I will therefore hold over the subject for another communication, since my object in this letter is not to point out the advantages of the road proposed by me, but to consider its disadvantages and to review the general situation.

In submitting the scheme, which I did, I was driven to doing so by the fact that I believed our trade on this road to be in danger. I was not at the time aware of the

fact, which was stated later by Sir E. Grey, and which would seem to show that my alarm was not without reason. In discussing the Convention in Parliament, it was given out that the Russians made it a condition for completing the Convention that the Kermanshah route should be included in their sphere. Now, since the Convention excludes territorial aggrandizement, the anxiety of the Russians would seem to be founded on one of two grounds:—

1. The possibility of mineral or industrial Concessions.
2. The importance of the trade on the route from a strategical, political, or commercial view.

It is true that the industrial possibilities of this district are great, but their exploitation is not a matter of the immediate future, nor is the Russian likely to be the man to take up their development; thus, unless there are mineral Concessions of which I am unaware, the ground would seem to be narrowed down to the trade on the route, and its political or strategical importance.

It has been given as an axiom that, with the Russian's political influence and commerce are, in Persia, interchangeable terms, should the interest be strategical the trade would, presumably, equally be made to pay for the improvement of the road.

It will then be instructive to examine the trade of the Kermanshah route during the last five years:—

							Total Imports.
							£
1903-4 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	893,117
1904-5 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	845,029
1905-6 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	745,674
1906-7 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,014,386
1907-8 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,240,445

Let us compare this with the various southern ports:—

				Total Imports.		
				1904.	1905.	1906-7.
				£	£	£
Bushire ..	..	..	..	889,825	761,932	863,812
Bunder Abbas ..	..	..	..	299,053	387,940	354,242
Lingah ..	..	..	..	69,445	100,317	176,057
Total of all southern ports, including Kishm, Charbar, &c. ..				1,275,099	1,270,249	1,484,568

I cannot quote this year's figures for the southern ports, which will, however, be at your disposal for further comparison by the time that this reaches you.

It will be seen that for total trade the Kermanshah route is more important than any other route from the south, and its steadily increasing figures show a tendency to approach in value the trade of all the southern ports put together.

So much for the general trade, now let us examine the figures in so far as they refer to British trade.

TOTAL Imports from the United Kingdom and India.

		Kermanshah.				
		1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.
		£	£	£	£	£
United Kingdom	.. ..	640,508	642,302	507,335	725,321	930,075
India	.. ..	92,915	64,988	74,855	86,262	159,781
		733,423	707,290	582,190	811,583	1,089,856

For purposes of comparison, I attach the only figures which I have, those of Bushire, Bunder Abbas, and Lingah.

		1904.	1905.	1906-7.
		£	£	£
Bushire—				
United Kingdom	.. ..	380,323	322,167	332,942
India	.. ..	204,009	176,253	263,540
		583,332	498,420	596,482
Bunder Abbas—				
United Kingdom	.. ..	..	133,110	90,948
India	.. ..	..	157,946	106,184
		..	291,056	197,132
Lingah—				
United Kingdom	.. ..	..	14,835	11,037
India	.. ..	..	66,373	127,002*
		..	81,208	138,039

* Mainly specie.

It will be seen that the difference is very markedly in favour of Kermanshah.

(A warning must always be given that in the Kermanshah returns the entry "country from which imported" cannot be depended upon as being accurate; the same warning applies to the Gulf ports, though there the imports from the United Kingdom should be more accurate, since they arrive in ships; still the above figures show the overwhelming importance to British trade of the western route, which is daily growing in popularity owing to its safety.)

The trade of Bushire then was greater in 1904 than in 1906-7, while that of Kermanshah shows an increase of over 100,000% in the same time, with a further increase of 200,000% during the present year, or a total increase of 300,000%, equal to about 30 per cent., in the past five years.

To this again may be added the further great possibilities for trade, though for this I can give no support other than my own opinion, backed by that of all competent persons with whom I have discussed the question.

I think that I have shown that the importance of our trade by this route is so great that, should there be any chance of danger to it, it is necessary for us to see what steps we can take to guard it.

Since writing my ideas in October last I have, however, approached the subject from a different point of view, and have now come to the conclusion that, though the Pusht-i-Kuh route does safeguard the trade above referred to, it is necessary, before considering it further, to determine how long it will be before the direct route via Khurramabad will be possible for use as a caravan road.

Before going further it will be well to compare these two routes first with reference to the trade of the Bagdad route to Hamadan, and then in regard to the natural sequence their respective values for trade with the capital.

Pusht-i-Kuh Route.				Khurramabad Route.			
<i>Dizful to Hamadan.</i>							
				Miles.			
Dizful to Dehbala	..	..	..	184	Dizful to Khurramabad	..	156
Dehbala to Kermanshah	..	..	..	84	Khurramabad to Burujird	..	63
Kermanshah to Hamadan	..	..	..	113	Burujird to Hamadan	..	80
Total	..	..	..	381	Total	..	299
<i>Dizful to Tehran.</i>							
				Miles.			
Dizful to Hamadan	..	..	..	381	Dizful to Burujird	..	219
Hamadan to Tehran, via Marek Kharabe	..	..	..	199	Burujird to Sultanabad	..	60
					Sultanabad to Kum	..	80
					Kum to Tehran	..	100
Total	..	..	..	580	Total	..	459

To Hamadan, then, there is a difference in favour of the Khurramabad route of 82 miles, to Tehran with the shortest route available a difference of 121 miles, or at least 6 stages.

This difference represents from 16 to 20 krans per mule-load for the shorter journey and 20 to 24 krans for the longer, or, to put it in figures more easily understood, a handicap of up to 48s. a ton on the shorter journey and 60s. a ton on the longer.

When writing my original scheme I was, I regret to say, unaware that the Khurramabad road was a British Concession, though I discovered it immediately afterwards. In referring to this route I wrote as follows:—

"The present history of Persia does not lead one to imagine that this route will be feasible for some years to come, and for the immediate future we have little interest in it except as a defensive measure."

The above statement is undeniably true of a route, only half of which—that in the neutral zone—is subject to our influence, and half of which is completely subject to the interest of another nation, more especially if we were already in possession of a rival road, by reason of which it would not be to our interest to assist in bringing pressure to bear to make the shorter road secure; the fact that we are already concessionnaires puts matters on a different footing, and it becomes necessary not only to compare the Pusht-i-Kuh route with the Bagdad road, but also to take into consideration the question of how long it is likely to be before the Khurramabad route can be made a possibility. 3*l*. per ton is a heavy handicap, and one which, on the completion of the direct route, would as completely destroy the Pusht-i-Kuh route, as, I consider, the Pusht-i-Kuh route would now destroy the Bagdad route.

The Luristan route must be completed before 1912, failing which the Concession lapses and the situation becomes that described in my previous letter, unless, of course, it is possible to extend the time limit; for this possibility I have not allowed since the question has not yet arisen.

The question then resolves itself for the present into a hope that a sufficiently settled government will exist through which to work; if there is no hope of that before 1912 my letter is so much waste paper, and may accompany the present Luristan Concession into the receptacle provided for such material.

Having then accepted the possibility of some government, through which we can act, it remains to decide whether the completion of our track before the Concession expires is feasible and what steps are necessary to make it a success.

It has been my experience in Persia that where the Consul has instructions to press on the spot and the Legation is pressing at head-quarters and, as a result of the two, the local Governor, who greatly fears the Legation, is worrying the Central Government, the latter are usually only too anxious to dispose of the matter.

With the present state of the country we need not be in any immediate fear of an attack on our trade on the Bagdad road, nor, indeed, can we hope to do much on the

Pusht-i-Kuh route till matters are in a more settled state for the country between Dizful and the Pusht-i-Kuh country is unsafe again owing to the Sagwend tribes.

Captain Lorimer has expressed his opinion that this distance can be made possible, and I thoroughly approve of his suggestion that the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh should be made responsible for the guarding of this portion of country also.

Thus for an attack to be made on our trade on the Bagdad road some period of rest is necessary, during which a foreign Power could obtain a concession, an occasion which would also provide us with the opportunity of taking the necessary steps to meet that attack.

There is then no reason for haste, except with reference to the date of the expiry of the Luristan Concession.

It appears to me that the course which we should follow is as follows:—

1. An engineer officer should be sent to travel over the Pusht-i-Kuh route as soon as it is possible to do so and report whether the *prima facie* case I have made out is correct or whether any obstacle exists. This officer should travel over one of the main arteries of Persia so as to understand that it is not necessary to produce a railway alignment and afterwards should submit his report.

2. With regard to the Luristan route I would suggest that the Vice-Consul, Ahwaz, and myself should concentrate our energies in bringing pressure to bear at each end of the route in order to induce the Persian Government to take steps to make it safe. I do not think that the question has ever been approached from the north, which is geographically the direction from which it should be met and is, indeed, the point from which the Persian Government itself approaches the Government of the Province of Luristan.

The actual measures to be taken depend very largely on the point of view of His Majesty's Government as to how far they feel inclined to bring pressure with reference to the internal affairs of the country. I would suggest, however, that I should be allowed to proceed to Khurramabad, the seat of the Government of Luristan, and from there submit what appear to me to be the most likely measures to produce success.

In this reference it is interesting to note opinions which have already been expressed on this subject.

In a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne dated the 3rd March, 1903, Sir Arthur Hardinge says, in his last but one paragraph, I believe it would be found quite feasible to enlist among the tribes of Luristan a force of road guards which might in time develop into the nucleus of a little military force under our influence, and prove of considerable political value for its extension in South-West Persia.

Major Burton, in his diary of the 15th January, 1904, says: "I asked him (Khanjan Khan, a Lur Chief) if it was possible to open and keep open the road to Khurramabad. He said it could be done if the same number of men who had been employed by Ain-ed-Dowleh were again put in charge of it; that is 40 horsemen and 150 foot. When the guards ceased to be paid, the road was again closed and caravans plundered."

In a report dated Tehran the 28th February, 1903, Mr. Consul Preece says: "The real obstacle to the development of the road is the unruliness of the various Lur tribes, whose summer and winter camping grounds are crossed by them (road?) or are very near it. I am of opinion that, although these tribes have been at variance with the Persian local authorities, yet they might easily be wheeled into line by an astute political officer or a good servant of the Transport Company who was in a position to spend money. This certainly was the impression left on my mind after passing through the country and from my talk with the Chiefs; 1,000*l.* per annum, judiciously spent, would not only secure the roads from interference from the Lur Chiefs but would make them our active friends."

In any case the result of the suggestion which I have given above would be that, while pressing hard for the securing of the road, the Concession for which we already possess, we should at the same time be going forward with the alternative route, and thus would be able to advance from whichever position we found to be the most tenable.

Should we find that the direct route could not be completed within the time required, and that the time limit could not be extended, we should at any rate be in a position to safeguard ourselves against attack on the Bagdad route.

In conclusion, I would refer to a telegram, No. 33 of the 3rd March, 1904, from Sir Arthur Hardinge to the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta:—

"Please refer to your telegram dated 29th February. I would suggest that the Consular district of Kermanshah should include Provinces of Kermanshah, Malayer, Hamadan, and Kurdistan. If this suggestion is accepted, Luristan would remain in the Arabistan district."

The above proposal was agreed to.

In practice it has been found that the north of Luristan is better managed from Kermanshah; Burujird and Khurramabad are but a few days' journey from Hamadan which, as I have already pointed out in my Administration Report for 1907-8, should be the summer quarters of His Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah. Similarly Dedbala, the capital of Pusht-i-Kuh, is but four marches from Kermanshah and Hussai-ieh, the Wali's winter place, two marches beyond, and four or five marches from Kasr-i-Shirin. All these places are either completely cut off from Arabistan or are two weeks' march or more from Ahwaz. Under these circumstances it appears to me that it would be considerably to the advantage of His Majesty's Government if Luristan were divided between the two Consular districts.

If a hard and fast line must be laid down it should run from Khurramabad to Bedrai on the Turkish frontier, but it would be preferable not to fix any rule as to where the point of division should lie, but to leave the matter to settle itself by general convenience.

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. HAWORTH, Captain,
His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah.

Inclosure 8 in No. 405.

Consul Haworth to Consul-General Cox.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Tehran, August 10, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, in accordance with your instructions, I discussed with Captain Lorimer the question of opening up trade routes with the south of Persia.

We came to the conclusion, however, that it would be better for me to submit the Report which I had written, on which Captain Lorimer could dispatch any criticisms he might wish to make rather than to send a joint Report.

It will be seen that Captain Lorimer and I agree on the main points of what is required, and that we are both of the opinion that the Pusht-i-Kuh route is perfectly feasible, we are, however, also both agreed that it can only be regarded as a *pis aller*.

The main point of our disagreement is that Captain Lorimer is doubtful of a Consul being able to effect anything at all, and he states that all initiative must come from Tehran.

I, on the other hand, maintain that a Consul on the spot can effect a very great deal, that he is the man who can best see what is needed and what is possible.

The Consul being on the spot adds considerable point to any representations which the Legation may make to the Central Government, and, indeed, this seems to me not the least among the reasons for which a Consul exists in Persia.

I think that it is now almost an axiom, that a route must be opened up from the south, and that the sooner it is done the better—both from a point of view of our commerce and our political influence.

In this reference, one of my chief points is that up to date the point from which we have attempted to approach the question is geographically and administratively incorrect. Luristan is always approached, both by the Persian and Russian Governments, from the north, and we should act in a similar manner.

Since writing the accompanying despatch, the question of a railway from Julfa to Mohammérah has been opened. Naturally, the fact that the Russian Government has consented to the principle of a railway completely changes the aspect of affairs, but I would point out that to build a railway a survey is necessary, a working party is required and material must be transported, while the railway itself would take years to complete. Mr. Loraine, Secretary of the Legation at Tehran, has recently written a Memorandum quoting Mr. Whigham in saying that roads do not necessarily form part of the evolution of railways.

The correctness of this view is difficult to dispute, but I would submit that the opening up of the country and the use of a caravan track, even to the extent of improving one already in existence, are the necessary preliminaries to the building of a railway. Such a track might well be used to assist our commerce while the making of the railway was in progress, and it would appear even to be worth while to build caravanserais at such points where suitable water determined that in the future railway stations would be required; of course such a track would follow the shortest route, and would not necessarily adhere to the inclined gradient of the proposed railway alignment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. HAWORTH, *Captain,*
His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah.

Inclosure 9 in No. 405.

Consul-General Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, December 29, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to lay before the Government of India a copy of a report submitted by His Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah, in continuation of his telegram dated the 10th October, 1907, in which he urged the importance of opening up the Pusht-i-Kub route between Ahwaz and Kermanshah. Owing to absence in connection with the recent search for the Humaidi pirates, I have been unable to deal with the papers before.

2. In the course of correspondence regarding the probable advent of the Bagdad Railway and the consequent likelihood of a German campaign against the British commerce which now follows the Shatt-el-Arab route, I have more than once during the past year commended to the attention of Government the increased potential value to us with which the alternative routes into South-Western Persia via the Karun have now become endowed.

Similarly, by the light of the Anglo-Russian Convention lately concluded, Captain Haworth now urges the vital importance of the Ahwaz-Kermanshah route in particular.

I think I am right in gathering from the past correspondence that the fundamental importance to us of the early improvement of communications through the region under reference is primarily accepted by His Majesty's Government, and that at present the question is rather one of ways and means and the selection of a favourable opportunity for forward action on our part. Unfortunately in this latter connection His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, speaking of Messrs. Lynch's Luristan Concession in a recent despatch of the 10th October to the Foreign Office, expressed the views that the present moment was most inopportune for pressing the fulfilment of concessions held by foreigners, owing to the hostility of the National Assembly towards foreign enterprise generally. The political situation in Tehran, however, is nothing if not kaleidoseopic, and it is possible that His Majesty's Representative may now consider, as seems *prima facie* to be the case, that developments following on the recent abortive *coup d'Etat* at the capital have made the outlook much more favourable to the solution of the problem now under consideration than was the case when he penned the despatch referred to. I particularly allude to the elevation of the Nizam-es-Sultaneh to the post of Prime Minister. This venerable official, who it will be remembered came into acute issue with us as Governor-General of Arabistan a few years ago, seems anxious to bury if he cannot forget the past in this respect. He is now, I believe, on most happy terms with His Majesty's Legation, and was at any rate extremely friendly and, as far as he could be, helpful, during his recent sojourn as Governor-General of Fars; but what is chiefly significant at the present moment is the fact that he is uncle and father-in-law of the Sardar-i-Mukarrem, now Governor-General of Arabistan-cum-Luristan, whose active interest in the opening up of communications through Luristan has been the subject of frequent reference during the past year. Moreover, the Nizam himself has very large vested interests in Arabistan which he would presumably be glad to promote.

Should the above hopeful surmise as to the improvement of the situation in Tehran be considered by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to be well-founded, it would seem to follow that the exercise of any official pressure upon the Persian Government (a course which he strongly deprecates) might be avoided, and that just as much or more might

be achieved by our securing the sympathy and unobtrusive co-operation of the Nizam-es-Sultaneh and the Sardar-i-Mukarrem in the furtherance of a project which, when put into execution, is likely to work just as much to their profit as ours.

3. Supposing therefore for a moment that by the light of recent developments forward action in some form is considered expedient, the first thing to be done seems to be for us to decide in what form and which direction our energies should be directed.

There are two routes to be considered, the Dizful-Khoramabad alignment, the adoption of which has hitherto proved hopeless, and the Dizful-Kermanshah route now advocated by His Majesty's Consul, Kermanshah.

Captain Haworth submits his recommendations regarding the latter alternative with a confident enthusiasm which enforces sympathy, but whereas according to his view one of the primary conditions for the success of his scheme is the exclusion of Messrs. Lynch from participation in it, it seems to me that under the terms of their Luristan Concession they alone as the "Road Company" would be entitled to undertake the construction of any one road now inaugurated between Ahwaz and the north. Had they already selected and inaugurated the Dizful-Khoramabad route, thereby using up their concession for "one road" between Ahwaz and Tehran, then perhaps a concession for another road from Dizful to Kermanshah might be considered open to any one who might be able to acquire it from the Persian Government; but so long as no road has been commenced Messrs. Lynch seem clearly to have the sole right to take the first step.

In any case having regard to the views expressed by Mr. Marling as to the hostility displayed by the National Assembly to the grant of concessions to foreigners, it is probable that His Majesty's Government at present would feel unable to encourage any British competitor in the quest for a fresh concession. It would seem therefore that the only course open to us is to make the best of Messrs. Lynch.

4. But before Government decided to press one alternative to the extinguishment of the other, I venture to suggest, for their consideration, that it would appear practically possible to keep a hold on both routes without technically exceeding the terms of Messrs. Lynch's concession. I mean that if the Dizful-Kermanshah alternative were decided upon for our main effort, as offering the best advantages and chances of success under existing conditions, it seems reasonable to suppose, in view of the favourable attitude of the merchants of Khoramabad, that a branch to the latter town from the most convenient stage would come into existence automatically. In any case the furtherance of such a branch is a matter in regard to which Messrs. Lynch or we working through them should be able to come to an understanding with the Sardar-i-Mukarrem.

5. The selection of one route or the combination of both alternatives are questions about which opinions will doubtless differ; but having regard to recent developments I venture to think that it will be accepted that the opening of communications northwards from Ahwaz by one route or another has become a matter of Imperial moment in the general interests of British commerce.

If that is conceded and if the Road Company can satisfy His Majesty's Government that they are unable by their unaided efforts to take up the project, then I submit that the question of supplying the necessary aid, or of working the Concession ourselves through the Road Company as our man of straw is a matter for the urgent consideration of His Majesty's Government.

6. For the present I feel that it is premature for me to offer comment upon the details of Captain Haworth's scheme which in some places overlaps suggestions made by Captain Lorimer with both of whom I am communicating further. Meanwhile, I respectfully submit the foregoing observations for the consideration of the Government of India and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, to whom a copy of this communication is being forwarded.

Inclosure 10 in No. 405.

Consul Haworth to Consul-General Cox.

(Confidential.)

Kermanshah, October 22, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to address you with reference to the subject of the improvement of the prospects of British trade in the district fed from the towns of Kermanshah and Hamadan.

[1599]

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The former town supplies Burujird, Senna, and the Pusht-i-Kuh country; the latter Senna, Sultanabad, Doulutabad, Nehawend and in certain classes of goods, notably Manchester goods, Tabreez and Tehran.

Under the new Treaty practically the whole of this country is earmarked to the Russians for purposes of concession. We have, however, a large trade already existing in the districts I have named, and the imports of Manchester goods alone form one of the largest entries in the Kermanshah customs returns, while this year's exports of that class of goods from Hamadan to Tabreez have notwithstanding bounties exceeding previous years.

There is no question that it is not intended under the Treaty that we should surrender this large trade into Russian hands, at the same time, under circumstances which it rests with the Russians to produce, there is equally little doubt that but a small portion, if any, of this trade will remain to us unless we take measures to preserve it.

The present route by which all this trade enters Persia is via Bagdad to Kermanshah and Hamadan whence, as noted, it is distributed.

I understand that for the next two years the concession for this road lies with a Persian who, up to the present, has taken no action on his rights. It matters little if this be correct or not, for it would be easy for the Russians or any other foreign Power to purchase the right if they did not propose to wait the two years for its expiry.

With the road a Russian Concession and with the very complete system of bounties followed by that country, competition would soon be made impossible.

The toll on mules on the Kaswin-Hamadan road is 4 krans per head. With a similar charge and a reasonable rebate to Russian firms but few loads would be imported through British agents. Thus, once the open door were passed its advantages would cease, and I think it will be admitted that once the importing agents were Russian firms, Russian goods would gradually oust the British articles which have hitherto been able to compete against the bounty system when applied without other aids and advantages.

It is inconceivable that the Russians will not cast an eye on such a profitable business, and it follows that where they produce similar goods they will attempt to monopolize the trade, and in other cases they will act as they have in the case of tea, and will take care that all goods so imported come through Russian middlemen.

It remains then to us to see what steps we can take, not only to protect the trade which exists, but to exploit the large market which still remains untouched, and which, as I have mentioned in my diaries, could easily be gained. (In this reference I would point to the samples which I obtained from the Cawnpore Woollen Mills, and which resulted in an immediate order for close on 1,000*l.* worth of goods.) I have been dissatisfied with the Bagdad route since first I came to Kermanshah, its disadvantages are numerous, traffic is dependent on the few steamers which are allowed to ply on the river, and consequently goods are detained for long periods at Bussorah, there are Turkish transit charges to be paid amounting to 1 per cent., constant illegal charges varying from 1 to 3 per cent., and lastly heavy agency charges. I may quote Messrs. Lynch whose charges are 5 per cent. under this head alone.

If any other route could be found which would obviate these difficulties the whole Persian traffic would very soon be deflected to that route.

Two such routes exist, one partly, one wholly, within the sphere which is open to British initiative.

The first, the Mohammerah-Ahwaz-Khurramabad-Hamadan route is open to us as far as somewhere near above Khurramabad. It is open to the Russians throughout its length. The present history of Persia does not lead one to imagine that this route will be feasible for some years to come and for the immediate present we have little interest in it except as a defensive measure.

The second route is open to us in its entirety, at any rate to within a mile or so of Kermanshah, and it is to this route that I would draw attention.

I attach herewith a précis made from Burton's Reports on the road, together with what I consider necessary to make the road practicable as a mule road.

Major Burton makes in all thirteen stages from Dehbala, in Pusht-i-Kuh, to Dizful. In my original and telegraphed estimate I adhered to these stages making—

	Stages.
From Kermanshah to Dehbala	5
" Dehbala to Dizful	13
" Dizful to Mohammerah	10

On reference to the précis, however, it will be seen that many of the distances are small, 11 to 14 miles or little more than half a charwardar's ordinary march.

I have accordingly cut down the thirteen stages to ten stages. These also are not arbitrary, and should the scheme be approved it would be necessary to travel over the road, and after careful examination to decide definitely where caravanserais would be required.

I merely take Major Burton's report as a statement of what can in actuality be found in case it is not possible to improve upon it. The distances, however, are very unequal, and there is little doubt from the general tenor of his report that the marches could be more equalized.

(The total distance from Dehbala to Dizful is estimated at 184 miles which would give ten average marches of 18.4 miles each.)

I have no copy of Major Baird's Report, but I discussed the matter with him and his opinions were in accord with the possibility of the scheme.

My original information and Captain Gough's tour showed five marches to Pusht-i-Kuh, i.e., Dehbala. Shawal Levi, a Jew and a British subject, in whose hands lie the entire Pusht-i-Kuh trade, tells me that only three marches need be allowed, it would be safer to put it at four marches. Thus the revised distance would be—

	Stages.
Kermanshah to Dehbala	4
Dehbala to Dizful	10
Dizful to Ahwaz	6
Ahwaz to Mohammerah	4
	<hr/> 24

It will then be necessary to allow thirteen caravanserais between Kermanshah and Dizful. I have allowed one extra caravanserai as a safeguard.

I have calculated at the rate of 3,000 tomans per caravanserai equal, at the present rate of exchange, to 9,000 rupees. It is certain that one water reservoir will be required at Khushkadul. I have allowed for a second at a price of 2,000 rupees each.

I have allowed 10,000 rupees for mending the road, as at only five of the stages would repairs be necessary. In Persia also the muleteer is not exacting as any one who has seen the main arteries of the country will admit.

Burton mentions that bridges would be required for various irrigation channels between the Karkhah and Dizful. The common system in Persia is to lay down half-a-dozen poplar trees side by side, to cover these with brushwood and then to ram the whole lot down with earth; thus at a trifling cost a bridge is made which answers all the purposes required. Even on the post carriage road to Sultanabad the bridge across the irrigation channels are made as above.

At the Karkhah it might be necessary to have a ferry, but there is no reason why this should be an expensive business. A flying or swinging bridge of the pattern shown in the Military Book of Fortification would answer the purpose admirably at a small cost. A modification of this system is in daily use in Kermanshah across the Korasu when the river is unfordable. The pontoon of this bridge will carry four horses at a time. For the route all that would be needed would be two such pontoons to carry ten mules each. I have allowed for 20,000 rupees for contingencies or unforeseen expenditure, thus the total estimated cost is 1,60,000 rupees. It stands to reason that an estimate made without travelling the road must be extremely rough, but with the exception of the repairs to the road, the items are taken from average costs of such works, while under contingencies I have allowed a large sum.

The road being complete there rest the two important points of supplies and guarding.

In my précis I have shown that at every stage but one supplies are obtainable within easy distance at the proper period of the year; the only question lies in storing them. I have been obliged to take the Jew, Shawal Levi, into my confidence. He informs me that he would take over the contract for supplies, and adds that he knows that the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh, with whom he is in constant touch, would be only too glad to join him in the matter.

There remains the question of guarding. The Wali's territory extends to the Jhikao, two marches from Dizful. I would recommend a royalty per mule to the Wali for guarding the route as far as it lay in his district. Shawal Levi again informs me that he knows that the Wali would welcome the project, and would undertake the guarding of the road so far as it lay within his dominions. The Wali is supposed to be pro-English.

The Jhikao is but two marches from Dizful, and from thence the Vice-Consul at Ahwaz could no doubt arrange matters on a similar understanding. I note that in the latest diaries it is stated that goods have reached Dizful from Ahwaz. In my original plan I had proposed to work the road between Mohammerah and Ahwaz, but on counting the cost I see that it would probably be too expensive as a start. In case the river could not compete with the traffic it would be necessary to use the road also.

With twenty-four marches on this route it would be possible to land goods in Kermanshah in thirty-one days, in Hamadan in thirty-six days, and in Tehran in forty-six. Compare this with the present route, where goods cannot be hoped for at Kermanshah by the traders under three or four months from the date of arrival at Bussorah, and they frequently take much longer.

The next question to be considered is the comparative cost of the two roads. This is a little difficult to estimate accurately, as it entails comparison between carriage of the shipping ton and the actual weights as carried by mules. I estimate that a mule-load from Bussorah to Kermanshah costs on an average $81\frac{1}{2}$ to $83\frac{1}{2}$ krans.

My calculation is as follows:—

Average rate from Bagdad to Kermanshah 7 tomans per mule.

Average rate from Bussorah to Bagdad 32.6 tomans per ton.

One mule-load is in Persia one half-kharwar, or 325 lbs., and therefore equal to one-seventh of a ton.

The cost of one mule-load from Bagdad to Bussorah is, then, $11\frac{1}{2}$ krans, or (if allowing one mule-load as the difference between the shipping ton and its real weight, we take six mule-loads to the ton), $13\frac{1}{2}$ krans; or $81\frac{1}{2}$ to $83\frac{1}{2}$ krans for the whole journey per mule.

To compete with this and still keep the disadvantages of the Bagdad road as an asset to the new route, it would be necessary to keep the price of the road journey between Ahwaz and Kermanshah down to 80 krans, leaving the few odd krans as the price per mule-load on the Karun River. It is, however, apparent that the new route could afford to be a trifle more expensive than the old one, owing to the great time saved and the interest on the money thereby involved.

In Kermanshah I usually hire mules at 4 krans per diem, occasionally at $4\frac{1}{2}$ krans. On a regular route, when there is a press of work, the charwardar is apt to raise his prices. In order to avoid this and to keep a regular rate on which the importer of British goods could depend, I would recommend the adoption of a system of subsidy as used on the Seistan route for the benefit of British traders. I am of opinion that I could arrange this, and will return to the subject in part 2 of this letter, in which I explain how I propose this system should be worked. My object then would be to keep the rate down to 80 krans for the journey, and I would estimate the subsidy at 200 rupees per mensem.

It may be noted that this would make it impossible for a foreign Power to charge any toll for mules should they be in possession of the Bagdad route, and that even for mules carrying their own goods.

In conclusion, caravanserais would be reproductive works, for it is customary to charge for the hire of rooms in addition to the profit made over selling grain for animals.

PART II.

In addition to the delays on the road, which make trade with Persia difficult, there are other causes which have hindered the expansion of British trade.

I have frequently asked a merchant why he has imported a certain article when he could do much better in England. The answer has been, "I do not know where to go in England." I would summarize the reasons why more articles of British manufacture are not found in general trade, as opposed to special, as follows:—

1. Want of means of connection between the merchants in England and those in Persia.
2. Want of facilities for ordering and forwarding goods.

I.—Want of Connection between English and Persian Merchants.

This difficulty is one that can be very easily remedied. In Kerman I was not very strongly in favour of sample rooms for reasons which I gave at the time, and I

remember that one of the chief of them was the difficulty of finding an agent who was capable of doing the work. This reason does not exist in Kermanshah and Hamadan. In both places I can find men fully fitted. In Hamadan we are particularly fortunate, for the agent of the Imperial Bank of Persia would take up the work, in which he would be assisted by his son, who was educated in England. I propose, then, to institute at both places sample rooms in charge of agents, who will not only show the articles sent them, but will visit the merchants at their offices and act as local commercial travellers.

These agents would book orders and be paid by the percentage allowed by the firms for whom they trade. For the fixing of these rates I propose addressing the Chambers of Commerce in India and the Board of Trade in England. I may mention that at Hamadan the custom, when dealing with Manchester firms is as follows:—

The merchant in Persia pays a deposit of 10 per cent. on giving his order; the firm then engages to land the goods at Bagdad within six months of receipt of instructions, and they hand over all papers connected with the goods to the shipping Company, who release the goods on receipt of the money due.

As I have already noted, agency fees at Bagdad are a heavy item, though probably few firms charge 5 per cent. like Messrs. Lynch, who have the advantage of being the shipping agents. Now I would suggest, should my scheme be approved, that Government should place one agent at Mohammerah and a second at Ahwaz. The system would then be that an order would be booked at Kermanshah or at Hamadan by the local British agent, and would be dispatched to the firm concerned. The firm would then dispatch the goods to the care of the British forwarding agent at Mohammerah, who would forward them to Ahwaz, where the agent would send them on at subsidized rates to the agent who had ordered them.

The method of releasing goods would have to be decided, as it might be dangerous for the agent to receive all money without an inspecting officer.* At the worst the present system could be adhered to.

Until the Pusht-i-Kuh road was made possible, I would suggest similar appointments being made at Bussorah and Bagdad for forwarding purposes. I have noted that goods lie for a long time at Bussorah. There are, however, in addition to Lynch's boats, Turkish boats which trade on the river, and the agent at Bussorah, in consigning the goods to the agent at Bagdad, would be able, where opportunities appeared favourable, to use the Turkish steamers, and thus save time. These agents would, of course, work under the eye of the British Consular officers, and would thus be able to escape illegal charges in Turkey.

On the Pusht-i-Kuh road being ready, these men could be shifted to Mohammerah and Ahwaz. They would know their work, and so would not make mistakes in starting the new road.

I have noted on the desirability of having a subsidized transport service. This appears the best method of assisting trade in Persia, as a foreign Power, in order to compete, must spend money in a similar way, and thus increase its expenses, which are possibly already large, in the form of bounties. I would then recommend that, until the new road is ready, I be allowed to employ similar means on the Bagdad road; then, on the completion of the Pusht-i-Kuh road, all the machinery would be ready, and would only require transfer from the one route to the other.

PART III.

To summarize, my suggestions are—

1. The making of a mule road between Mohammerah or Ahwaz and Kermanshah. Cost roughly estimated at 1,60,000 rupees, but mainly reproductive.
2. Appointment of agents at Kermanshah and Hamadan to act as unpaid commercial agents. Opening of sample rooms at Kermanshah and Hamadan. Estimated cost at each place, 5 rupees per mensem for rent; 200 rupees initial expenditure.
3. Appointment of paid receiving and forwarding agents at Bussorah and Bagdad, to be afterwards transferred to Mohammerah and Ahwaz. Estimate, 1,800 rupees per annum each.
4. Installation of a system of subsidized transport between Kermanshah and Bagdad, to be transferred to the Ahwaz-Pusht-i-Kuh road when ready. Estimate (the

* Vide postscript.

question would require to be raised, and the number of mules required to be settled, before a complete estimate could be submitted; I would, however, put the amount at what I name), 200 rupees per mensem.

In conclusion, I would suggest the inclusion of the Khurramabad-Hamadan road in the Concession as far as Khurramabad. This would protect the interests of the road which I now propose, and, should the Khurramabad route ever become practicable, would insure to us the same benefits as would accrue to any other country which might possess the Concession for the upper part of the road.

As soon as ever I am permitted to leave Kermanshah I propose to travel over the route I have given in my scheme. I greatly regret having to submit this plan without having previously gone over the road, but it appeared to me that it was necessary that I should at any rate know the general opinion of the Government of India on the subject without further delay. The matter appeared to me so urgent, in order that we might be in the field before it was too late, that I telegraphed to you a general idea of what I proposed.

(Signed) L. HAWORTH.

P.S.—The inspector of the bank, with whom I discussed the question, stated that the money could always be paid into the bank; the agent at Hamadan or Kermanshah could then send the bank receipt to the agent at the shipping port, who could then release the goods.

L. H.

Inclosure 11 in No. 405.

Consul Haworth to Consul-General Cox.

(Confidential.)

Kermanshah, October 31, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith certain suggestions which I have to make with reference to the extension of British trade in Western Persia. This report has been delayed by my having to wait for some information, and by its being considerably amplified.

In case the Government did not propose to take up the question themselves, I think it highly probable that the Imperial Bank of Persia would do so, especially if the Government supplied the money.

I could, I think, get a British subject here to take up the idea, but I am of the opinion that, from a point of view of British trade, it would be very much better if the Government supplied the money, so that they could dictate the terms and see that the route was for the benefit of British trade, and not for that of the Company concerned.

I am especially frightened of Messrs. Lynch, who have the name in these parts of being very grasping.

Inclosure 12 in No. 405.

THE PUSHT-I-KUH ROUTE.

PRÉCIS from Major Burton's Report on the Road.

Stage.	Condition of Road.	Supplies.	Water and Fuel.	Remarks on Requirements for Mule Track.
Dehla to Culgal 3776	Fifteen miles. Practicable throughout for laden animals and generally good	Depend on whether crops are standing and presence of flocks	Wood and water abundant	(Caravanserai at Dehla included in four allowed between Kermanshah and that place.) Caravanserai— Supplies available and only require storing. This remark applies throughout except at Arkawaz where it is not proposed to make a halting place, and at the Jhikao River where they are to be obtained at one march distance.
Akawaz	Road throughout good, 10 miles	Sheep, goats, and cattle. No supplies	Water from river. Wood plentiful.	Caravanserai water reservoir— Repairs to road required.
Kushkadul 3880	Road good to half-way, afterwards bad slab rock in parts, 12½ miles	Cultivated slopes, supplies in small quantities from Lairs in summer, large flocks at same time	Water scanty from springs	Caravanserai— As regards fuel, see general notes at end. At most places in Persia fuel is brought from a distance of 1 or 2 marches, especially in the big towns.
Imanzada Nasradin 2690	Road good and practicable for animals, except at Pass of Piada Rah and Kuru River where it is most difficult and dangerous, 15½ miles	Patches of cultivation near, is surrounded by irrigation. In spring much corn cultivation along road	Water plentiful, fuel scanty	Caravanserai— Slight repairs to road. Thorn bushes are used throughout Persia as fuel.
Zarinabad 2692	Road practicable for laden animals, and good and easy except at crossing of ravine which is steep and narrow, 10½ miles	Broad cultivated plain and plateau near, supplies dependent on crops, and presence of large flocks of sheep and goats in April to October, good grazing in spring and early summer	Water plentiful, no fuel except thorn bushes.	Caravanserai— Repairs to road.
Behara 2040	Road throughout passable for laden animals, 10½ miles	In spring large amount of wheat and barley, also many thousands of sheep and goats and some cattle	Water abundant from river; fuel, thorn bushes	Caravanserai.
Neza Ali 1170	Road throughout very bad, at least one-half is unridable, and were not the steep ascents and descents of gypsum and of crumbling rock animals could not retain foothold, 13½ miles	At 1 mile distance is cultivated plateau which bears crops in spring. In spring quantity of wheat and barley crops near road, flocks of sheep and goats in spring and summer	Brackish spring; cane brakes	Repairs to road.

Stage.	Condition of Road.	Supplies.	Water and Fuel.	Remarks on Requirements for Mule Track.
Kalata 1040	Road for the first 3 miles hot and severely practicable for laden animals owing to boulders and slabs of rock, afterwards good, 14 miles	Crops of barley and wheat in spring and of Indian corn in October, large flocks of goats and some cattle. Kurd camps from October to April. Much grass.	Water from springs ..	Caravanserai—Repairs to road.
Tekez River	Road throughout good, 12½ miles	Much irrigated land in vicinity, flocks and herds abundant October till April	River water brackish, but drinkable, no fuel	Caravanserai.
Tappa Patak	Road throughout good, 13 miles	Crops of wheat in spring, in winter some cultivation. Kurd camps. Crops and herds frequent	Springs of water. Tekez River about a mile distant.	
Mikao River 600	Road throughout good, 11 miles	In winter large flocks of sheep and goats (no note on crops).	River water, scrub fuel, grass abundant	Caravanserai. (Is unavoidable unless next march can be shortened, in which case a second water reservoir would be necessary somewhere between the two rivers.)
Karkhah River	Road throughout good, 32½ miles	Wheat crops ripen in spring. October till April flocks and herds present	River water, some fuel, grass abundant	Caravanserai—Subject of ferry is dealt with in the main report I have submitted.
Dizful	Road crosses swampy ground and irrigation channels which are deep. Passage of Karkhah is easy only in autumn months, and even then reaches loads of mules. Many small bridges and culverts also would be necessary in the plain, 14 miles	Crops standing in spring and autumn, flocks and herds	Water throughout, grass and forage abundant	Subject of bridges for irrigation channels is dealt with in the main report.

Notes on Road divided into two Sections.

Dehkala to Kalata— Traverses the intricate hills. Water is abundant and forage plentiful, grass being especially luxuriant in spring and summer. Up to third stage wood is plentiful adjacent to the road, after that procurable from mountains. From Arakawaz to Meim River (fifth stage) crops are adjacent to the road	Kalata to Dizful— Road across plain. February produces luxuriant herbage which dries up in March and April, June to September heat is very great, water is procurable throughout except in the track between the Mikao and the Karkhah, it is, however, impregnated with salts and sulphur
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Remarks on Requirements for Mule Track.

From Kermanshah to Dehkala caravans already travel so no special report is necessary on the subject. As they carry their own supplies caravanserais would be required for storing once the route was a regular one.

With regard to the general question of supplies it is quite certain that as caravanserais started and a regular demand sprang up that, of those who now cultivate for a season and then move off to winter or summer quarters, a part would remain behind to meet the demand and supply the market. Thus small permanent colonies would spring up. I have noted this occurring in other places.

[30127]

No. 406.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 215. Very Confidential.)
Sir,

Gulshah, August 13, 1908.

THIS morning Mr. Loraine had an interview with M. Cesari, a Corsican Customs officer, who has recently been relieved of his duties at Kasr-i-Shirin. M. Cesari was given to understand that his removal was the result of a complaint made against him by one of the foreign Legations—an allegation which had secured him a very cold reception by the French Minister. M. Cesari had satisfied himself that the complaint had not emanated from the Russian Legation, and he was assured that none had originated from this Legation. He therefore infers, by a process of exclusion, that the German Legation must have procured his transfer.

He stated, in the course of conversation, that the Germans were making the most strenuous efforts to increase their trade with Persia by the Bagdad-Kermanshah route, and that a certain Berk Puttmann, resident in Bagdad, was the most active German trader in the field. This gentleman was a person of no importance until he received the Bagdad Agency of the Hamburg-Amerika Line and that of the Deutsche-Orient Bank, which placed at his disposal a considerable capital which he did not hesitate to employ in commercial ventures far more extensive than he had previously been in a position to undertake. Since then he appears to have profited enormously by his increased facilities; his large purchases of sugar in Marseilles and Trieste, an article which always commands a ready sale, have frequently rendered service to the shipping line, the freight paid thereon being frequently sufficient to enable them to cover the expenses of the voyage when they have a limited cargo on board. Herr Puttmann also has native agents among the tribes in the neighbourhood of Kermanshah through whom he buys large quantities of wool which he sells well; he is also a commission agent for the sale of various categories of German manufactures. M. Cesari added that we should hear in a week or two that Herr Puttmann had opened a branch in Kermanshah, and he anticipated that the Russians would make things as unpleasant for him as possible. The Russian Consul, he said, was already very angry with him for undertaking transport and insurance business in Persia, maintaining he had no right to do so.

It seems perfectly logical that the Germans should endeavour to obtain a firm commercial footing in Western Persia in anticipation of the advent of the Khanikin branch of the Bagdad Railway and its possible extension into Persia, and the facts I have reported above make it appear that such is the case and further lend colour to a rumour that has been persistently current in Tehran of late that the Germans intend to open their bank at Kermanshah and to instal a branch at Tehran.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30128]

No. 407.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 216.)
Sir,

Gulshah, August 13, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 170 of the 15th July, I have the honour to report that since that date the struggle between the Shah's forces and the insurgents at Tabreez continued intermittently up to the 9th instant, and with fluctuating fortune.

On the 15th July the inhabitants of the quarter occupied by the insurgents unsuccessfully endeavoured to send a telegram to the Shah through the French Vice-Consul stating they were ready to surrender, but feared the Government troops would pillage their houses. The following morning the fighting, which had been incessant, ceased, and negotiations were begun by the Elders of the surrendered quarters, who sought to reconcile the authorities and insurgents. These, however, proved abortive, owing to the attitude of the Chief Mujtahed, who, having control over the telegraph wires, refused to allow the insurgent leaders to telegraph to Tehran to obtain the

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Shah's pardon, failing which, they refused to lay down their arms, though the Commander of the Imperial forces was willing enough that the telegram should be sent.

These events and the behaviour of the Mujtehed greatly incensed the population, and a resolve began to manifest itself to accept no amnesty or pardon from the Shah unless guaranteed by the foreign Consulates. On the 18th July Mr. Stevens telegraphed that hostilities were suspended, thanks to the Russian Consul-General having undertaken to disperse the Anjumen-i-Islamieh, the head-quarters of the Mujtehed and the Reactionary party, the town being practically in the hands of the armed populace, and many of the Government horsemen having deserted. On the 18th July a regiment of infantry 800 strong reached Tabreez and deserted immediately. Meanwhile the Russian Consul-General's intervention proved unavailing, and a partially successful attack was made on the Government troops, who were driven back to their second line of defence, but on the night of the 21st to the 22nd July the revolutionaries were compelled to recede from their advanced positions, reinforcements having arrived for the Shah's party. On the morning of the 23rd there was another lull, the revolutionaries, though hard pressed, having held their ground. On the next day fighting recommenced, the Royalists bringing a 9-inch mortar into action, which did considerable damage. On the 27th the situation got worse, six guns altogether being in action, and as the shooting was somewhat erratic the Christian quarter was thought to be in danger. On the 28th a meeting of the Consular Corps, attended by the merchants' delegates, was held at the Russian Consulate-General. The merchants stated that the population would lay down their arms on condition of receiving a complete amnesty for political offences, guaranteed by the Legations, the dissolution of the Anjumen-i-Islamieh, and Rahim Khan only being permitted to remain with fifty horsemen in Tabreez. The Consuls approved these proposals, and considered the revolutionary leaders should be permitted to leave Persia without molestation.

Hostilities were suspended during these and other efforts at reconciliation, but again broke out on the 1st August, neither party being able to offer guarantees for the execution of the terms of any proposed settlement. The citadel, which the revolutionaries continuously held, was bombarded, and shells fell in the Christian quarter. On the 2nd the revolutionaries cut all the wires of the Indo-European Telegraph Company, and His Majesty's Vice-Consul only induced them with great difficulty to permit the necessary repairs, and then they required that no Government messages should be sent.

On the 4th August news of the restoration of the Turkish Constitution was divulged by the Ottoman Consul-General. This naturally put heart into the National party, who placarded the town with a manifesto roughly to the effect that, unless they could obtain a satisfactory settlement before the arrival of a Governor-General with reinforcements, the Sultan would be as good a Sovereign as the Shah.

On the 7th August fighting, which had been desultory, was vigorously renewed by the Shah's forces. Heavy fighting continued for three days with shell and rifle fire.

Mr. Stevens has mentioned in several telegrams that the conduct of the Shah's troops has been characterized throughout by "atrocious acts" and indiscriminate looting. On the 2nd August he reported that the firms of Ziegler and Stevens had officially addressed the Consulate-General, expressing the hope that the Persian Government would be held responsible for losses eventually sustained, as they feared the looting of houses and shops would spread to the bazaars. I thereupon addressed a note to the Persian Government, asking that proper steps should be taken to protect the property of British subjects, and saying that my Government would be compelled to hold that of His Majesty the Shah responsible for any losses sustained through the action of troops serving the Persian Government. On the 9th August I received a responsive note from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating that my note had been communicated to the Grand Vizier, who had been specially requested to send the necessary orders for the protection of British firms and subjects.

It is difficult to estimate how far the serious events in Tabreez since the Shah's *coup d'Etat* were originally inspired by genuine political motives, and if so for how long the struggle maintained its essentially political character. I am myself inclined to believe that the opposition to Rahim Khan's operations was largely actuated by private animosity on the part of the "national leaders," and I think that there can be little doubt that the Nationalists now feel there is nothing left for them but to fight to a finish, and that were they to surrender, conditionally or unconditionally, neither their lives, their families, nor their property would be safe from the vengeance of the

Royalist troops, exasperated by the prolonged resistance of the Azerbaijan "patriots." Nor is it likely that their fears are ill-founded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30129]

No. 408.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 217.)

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

Sir,

THE Acting Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department called on me on the 23rd ultimo, and said that he had been approached by the Minister of Telegraphs with a request for our estimate of the cost of putting the Ahwaz-Borazjun telegraph line in complete repair, and that when, a day or two after the request was made, he had called on the Minister to talk the matter over, Mukhber-ed-Dowleh had expressed the view that the best course would be that the Indo-European Telegraph Department should take over the maintenance of the line altogether.

Thinking it prudent not to display too much eagerness, Mr. King Wood replied that he would be most happy to furnish the estimate, but that the question of the Department taking over the line was more important and would have to be referred to London.

In Mr. King Wood's opinion, in which I entirely concurred, there seems to be a very fair chance of obtaining control of the Ahwaz-Borazjun line, and possibly even of the continuation to Mohammerah, if the question were properly handled. Mukhber-ed-Dowleh had always been, and still is, on the most friendly terms with the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and, provided it could be kept from him that there was any political interest involved, he—Mr. King Wood—believed it quite feasible to induce his Excellency to make an Agreement which would secure the results we have in view. It would, however, be prudent that the Legation should not appear to have any interest in the question or make any move on it, as otherwise Mukhber-ed-Dowleh would no longer look on it as a question of purely administrative interest and would decline to act on his own responsibility.

I should explain that, unlike his predecessor, Sepahdar, who farmed the telegraphs, Mukhber-ed-Dowleh is actually Minister of Telegraphs, and administers the system on account of the Government; presumably, therefore, any Agreement made with him as Minister could be held to be perfectly binding.

The opportunity seemed to be unusually favourable for attacking the question, and I therefore, by my telegram No. 244 of the 24th ultimo, suggested that Mr. King Wood might be authorized to try to come to terms with Mukhber-ed-Dowleh.

Mukhber-ed-Dowleh has more than once reverted to the question in conversation with Mr. King Wood, but though he harps continually on the advisability of confiding the line to the Indo-European Telegraph Department, he has not yet made any definite proposal, and Mr. King Wood has not thought himself justified in trying to bring him to the point so long as he had received no definite authorization to do so from London. I have now, however, informed him, confidentially, of the substance of your private telegram of the 5th instant, and he will try to elicit from Mukhber-ed-Dowleh on what terms the arrangement might be made.

The Dutch Minister informed me nearly a month ago that he was much interested in the proper upkeep of the line, and I gather that it was in consequence of his complaints that Mukhber-ed-Dowleh first approached Mr. King Wood. I propose to let M. de Sturler understand that he will do well to continue to press the question, but not to take any steps myself for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30130]

No. 409.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 218. Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

SINCE the *coup d'État* of the 23rd June, it has been almost impossible owing to the chaos prevailing in every branch of the Administration to make any progress with ordinary current business, and among such questions has been that of the transfer of the lien of the Imperial Bank of Persia from the Customs receipts of Kermanshah to those of Bushire.

As a matter of fact, however, the Imperial Bank of Persia has not been pressing the Persian Government very insistently on the point, but has rather devoted its energies to obtaining the recognition by the Shah and the Minister of Finance of the debts standing in the name of Shua-es-Sultaneh as debts due by the State. I must confess that the wisdom of this policy appears to me to be questionable. The Bank possesses papers which under the pre-Constitutional régime under which they were contracted would certainly have been admitted as proof that these debts were a Government liability, and there would seem to be no necessity for now getting them recognized as such, while it may be questioned whether an Assembly hostile to the Shah would accept the signatures of His Majesty and the Minister of Finance as valid while the Constitution is suspended. However, a precedent having been set in the case of Amir Behadur's debts, of which Mr. Rabino, acting no doubt on the instructions of the Board, obtained the recognition by Sani-ed-Dowleh while the Medjliss still existed, Mr. Hawkins has thought it prudent to follow out the same policy.

The transfer of the Bank's claims from Kermanshah to Bushire has not been entirely neglected, but it has not been seriously pushed; but as the branch of the Russian Bank is about to be opened—the Manager started for his post a few days ago—it is likely that the Imperial Bank of Persia will shortly have to appeal for the assistance of the Legation. I shall, of course, give all the support in my power.

In this connection I may add that as soon as the Russian Bank has begun to encash the Customs receipts in Kermanshah, it is practically decided that the Imperial Bank of Persia will transfer its branch to Hamadan, which as a trade centre is far more important than Kermanshah, and will retain only an agency at the latter town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30131]

No. 410.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 219.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a statement, drawn up by the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Legation, showing the strength and distribution of the Persian Cossack Brigade at the beginning of June last, also a letter containing some account of recent changes in the brigade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 410.

Major Stokes to Mr. Marling.

(No. 52.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a statement of the strength and distribution of the Persian Cossack Brigade at the beginning of June last.

The total number of 1,500 is approximate. I am unable to state the strength of the brigade exactly, but understand that about 1,500 men have usually been maintained out of 1,800 allowed for in the Budget.

Since the 23rd June various schemes for increasing the strength of the brigade have been under discussion. One suggestion was to enlist all the road guards in

Persia in the brigade, the strength of which was then to be 25,000. Additional Russian officers were to be entertained for the training of these men. Such a scheme, if carried out, would provide Russia with a means of increasing her influence in every part of Persia. The manner in which the Persian Cossack Brigade has been used in the past to serve the Intelligence Department of the Russian War Office will be reported on in a later communication.

Colonel Liakhoff has now been authorized to increase the strength of the brigade to 2,500 of all ranks, and has since the 23rd June enlisted some 200 men—of whom 150 were to replace casualties, including dismissals—and 50 horsemen from the Talesh Doulap Tribe, whose Chief is Amid-us-Sultan (Nasruttala Khan). The remainder required to complete 2,500 are to come from the Malayir and Sare Tribes.

The machine-guns, until now in charge of M. Hase, an ex-non-commissioned officer of the German Army, have been handed over to Colonel Liakhoff, as have also eight of the field guns which reached Tehran last month.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, *Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 410.

STRENGTH and Distribution of the Persian Cossack Brigade at the beginning of June 1908.

Urmia	80 of all ranks.
Tabriz	275 "
Kermanshah	1 "
Kerman	70 "
Mashed	16 "
Turbat-i-Haidari	10 "
Gilan	75 "
Mazindaran	40 "
Astabad	20 "
Gimabad-i-Kabus	13 "
Total in provinces	550
Tehran, approximately	550
On leave	400
Total	1,500

Of the 550 in Tehran a large number—100 to 150—are permanently employed as guards to Legations and private houses of wealthy Persians. The band, which numbers 70 men, is also included in the 550.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, *Major,*
*Military Attaché.**Gulahek, August 14, 1908.*

[30132]

No. 411.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 220.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 99 of the 16th June in which you were so good as to inquire whether, in my opinion, any advantage would be gained by the foundation of a British school at Tehran, and whether the Persian Government would be likely to agree to grant a subvention towards its maintenance.

As regards the first point I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that the establishment of a properly conducted English school in the capital would be of the greatest benefit not only to our own interests by counteracting the spread of German influence which must surely follow on the foundation of the new German school, but also to that of the Persians themselves by the spread of sound education, and, what is still more necessary, sound morality. I feel confident, also, that such an establishment would have no difficulty in competing successfully with the German establishment. In the German school the German language as that in which instruction is conveyed must necessarily be the first acquirement of the pupils, but

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German to a Persian is of little practical use as compared with English, and this fact alone would probably determine Persian parents to send their sons to a British rather than to a German school. There is no doubt, also, that there are many Persians who, though anxious to send their sons to be educated in England, have been deterred from doing so on account of the high cost of education there, and have decided to send them to Germany, where the expense is much lower. This difficulty would be removed by the creation of a British school in Tehran. In other ways, also, I believe that there is a decided feeling in favour of England as compared with other countries. Corrupt as the majority of Persians are, there are many who are perfectly well aware of the value of honesty, and there is a general feeling that this quality is essentially English, and might be best acquired by contact with, and instruction by Englishmen.

The success of the school in the matter of attracting scholars may therefore be looked upon as assured.

Of the ultimate advantages of the school from both a commercial and political point of view, you, Sir, are far better able to judge than myself, but there is a point to which I am perhaps justified in drawing your attention, namely, that it is probable that owing to improvements in telegraphy, a considerable proportion of the staff of either the Indo-European Telegraph Department or the Indo-European Telegraph Company will shortly be withdrawn from Tehran. This will result in a very appreciable reduction of the British colony in Tehran, which in its turn will react unfavourably on the consideration in which it is held. It must also affect the demand for English commodities and the opportunities for making them known. The number of instructors in the school under contemplation would not of course numerically compensate for the reduction in the Telegraph establishment, but, indirectly, it is quite possible that their influence for the diffusion of English ideas and wants would eventually be of greater value.

As to the prospects of obtaining a subvention for the school from the Persian Government I can speak less hopefully. At the present moment it is almost certain that the Shah, who is practically an absolute Monarch, and is being everlastingly warned that the Constitutional movement was the work of England and is still being encouraged by her, would regard a British school as a nursery of revolutionary ideas, and would plead the grievously embarrassed condition of Persian finance as an excuse for refusing it. But as soon as the Medjliss is recalled into existence, I think it quite reasonable to expect that a moderate subvention could be obtained without difficulty. But in any case the bulk of the expenses of the school, at all events for a few years, would have to be guaranteed from England. I believe, however, that the expenditure would be amply justified by the results.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30134]

No. 412.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 222.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

THE very full Reports which I have sent by telegraph on the subject of the Hormuz oxide trade will, I hope, have placed you in possession of all the information I have been able to obtain here as to Moin-ut-Tujjar's prospects of retaining the Concession, and his probable future relations with Messrs. Strick or some other British firm, and I have now only a few observations of a general nature to offer.

It is very difficult to know what reliance should be placed on any individual statement made by Moin-ut-Tujjar unless one is in a position to form a fairly accurate surmise of his object in making it. His statements have therefore to be accepted with great reserve until they have received confirmation from other and independent sources. He himself, moreover, is extremely reticent; he enjoys, moreover, the reputation of being the most astute and unscrupulous trader in Persia, and his caution not to commit himself is proverbial.

It has thus been very difficult to arrive at the real facts of the case, and the difficulty has been the greater in that none of the British firms now interested in the oxide trade of Hormuz have any representatives in Tehran who could throw light on the Moin's policy.

It has been necessary also to conceal from him as much as possible the importance

we attach to the retention of the trade in British hands, as if he understood that there were any considerations of a semi-political nature involved he would certainly attempt to play the Germans off against us. As it is, I believe that he prefers our friendship to that of the German Legation, but suspects that one reason for our warm interest in the oxide question is that we seek to induce him to place his Hormuz Concession so far under British protection that the Legation will be able to use its position to bring pressure to bear on him in other matters in which there are British interests opposed to his own.

If Messrs. Ellinger could disabuse their client of this suspicion, I believe that the chief difficulty in the way of retaining the trade in British hands would be removed.

As regards the reported attempts of the German Legation to obtain the Hormuz oxide Concession for a German firm, presumably Messrs. Wöckhaus, Abbas Kuli Khan has been assured by the Minister of Finance that the German Legation did make a proposal of the kind some little time ago but had not followed the matter up. Kavamed-Dowleh said, further, the Moin's Concession was assured to him for the present, as the Shah wished it to remain in his hands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30135]

No. 413.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 223.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 179 of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw, inclosing translations of the written arguments exchanged between the Persian and Turkish Frontier Commissioners.

On reading these documents, it seems impossible to avoid arriving at the same conclusions as Mr. Wratislaw, namely, that a solution can scarcely be found until third parties step in to decide the question.

It is, however, not impossible that with the recent change of Government in Turkey the Ottoman Ministers, who have all along shown a far more reasonable attitude than the Sultan's unofficial advisers, will now be able to enforce their instructions on the Turkish Commission, and that Taher Pasha will either be relieved or will be induced to be more amenable to argument.

I may mention as a matter of curiosity that a large quantity of Dervish Pasha's papers, including, I believe, his original map, are in the possession of Nassouhi Bey, the new Ottoman Ambassador in Persia. These papers were given by Dervish Pasha to his daughter, who married Nassouhi Bey in her father's lifetime.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 413.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 11. Confidential.)

Sir,

Urumia, July 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegrams Nos. 42 and 44, I have the honour to inclose translations of the two notes recently exchanged between the Persian and Turkish Commissioners on the subject of the frontier dispute.

Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh's very diffuse, and in some places incoherent, effusion may be summarized as follows:—

After reproaching Taher with the failure of the Turkish Commission hitherto to adduce evidence to justify its trespass on Persian territory, and with its hurried departure from Urumia, Muhteshem argues that its return to the spot indicates that the Porte did not approve the position taken up by it. The *onus probandi*, he says, evidently falls on the Turks, who have disturbed the *status quo*, and as they have put forward no valid case the Persian Commission is under no obligation to rebut what does not exist. Nevertheless, it will submit its arguments as follows:—

1. Attention is drawn to the discrepancies in the claims advanced by successive Turkish Commissioners, Dervish Pasha in the original Frontier Commission and then in 1875, Zekki Pasha last year, and now Taher Pasha, who demands more than his predecessors. This divergence tends to prove that the Turkish claims are fundamentally unsound.

2. The Ottoman Turks are *parvenus* in Asia compared to the Persians, and as such any claim they make to territory once belonging to the latter must be proved up to the hilt.

3. Taher Pasha declares: first, that the districts east of the *status quo* line which the Turkish troops have recently wrongfully occupied formed part of the Turkish provinces west of the frontier, and therefore belong to Turkey; and, secondly, that all the Kurds, excepting those of Kotur, are Turkish subjects. In reply to the first, Muhteshem represents that mere assertion does not prove such a claim, but regard must be had to natural and geographical considerations, maps, State documents, &c., to say nothing of the declarations of Ottoman statesmen themselves, which support his contention that these districts, on the contrary, belonged to the Persian provinces east of the *status quo* line. The action of the mediating Commissioners in an incident at Lahijan also upholds this contention. With regard to the second, if all Kurdistan belongs to the Turks, how is it that there exists a Persian province of Kurdistan to which Turkey lays no claim? And why was Fazil Pasha recalled from Soujboulak, a Kurdish town, if all Kurdistan were Turkish? Further, the Treaty of 1822 and Article 8 of the Treaty of Erzeroum clearly show that the framers of them recognized that both States had Kurdish tribes depending on them.

4. Persia could very well claim territory lying west of the *status quo* line, but is restrained from doing so by respect for Treaty obligations and particularly the Treaty of Erzeroum. How different is the conduct of Turkey!

5. The Persian Commission takes its stand on the Treaty of Erzeroum, which within its four corners contains the solution of all frontier disputes. The one object with which it was contracted was to end frontier claims. Article 2 states the localities where cessions of territory are to be made, and Article 3 bars any further claims on either side for such cessions and leaves them the territory of which they were in possession at the time. The intrigues of Dervish Pasha when he absconded from his colleagues on the Frontier Commission deprived Persia of a few places, including Kotur, but the latter had to be disgorged subsequently.

6. Article 3 of the Treaty consists of two parts, one barring further territorial claims and the other providing for a Mixed Commission. If the latter was acted on, how can the Turks deny the validity of the former?

7. But Dervish Pasha did not hold himself bound even by Article 2, which he professed to recognize, and raised all sorts of claims other than those sanctioned therein. If Turkish functionaries evade one Article of a Treaty, naturally they will not shrink from evading another.

8. It must not be thought that the Persian Commission could not refute the various points raised concerning ancient Treaties. But the Treaty of Erzeroum was entered into expressly in order to put an end to years of dispute and misunderstanding, and was accepted by the Commissioners of the mediating and Contracting Powers at Constantinople in 1875 as the basis of negotiations. Therefore the Persian Commission declares that it considers as Persian all territory held by Persia at the date of the Treaty and that no claims to the contrary can be admitted.

Wherefore the Persian Commission invites the Turkish Commission to evacuate all the Persian frontier districts occupied by Turkey during the last three years and to pay an indemnity for the damage caused thereby.

Taher Pasha replied to the above communication by making the same charge against Muhteshem that Muhteshem had brought against himself, viz., that he had adduced no evidence in support of his case. Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzeroum has now, he said, been proved finally by the Porte in its Memorandum to the Persian Embassy to refer only to the districts mentioned in Article 2, while all other localities remained in dispute: and any further invocation of it would simply show a desire to waste time. He then proceeds to explain his reliance on ancient Treaties. The Treaty of Murad 4 (1639), according to him, defined the frontier on the principle of distinction of religion and nationality. At first sight this Treaty might possibly appear insufficiently explicit regarding the northern portion of the frontier, but this is only because that region was so incontestably Ottoman property that further explanation was unnecessary beyond the statement that "the Shias are not to interfere." The Turkish military

registers, showing that all the region in dispute, and more, was Turkish soil, were drawn up before 1639, and as at that time the Ottoman Empire was constantly expanding, it is inconceivable that any part of Kurdistan was lost in the meantime.

Muhteshem appears to have hinted verbally that the originals of the Treaty of 1639 have been destroyed, for Taher replies to this that it exists in the "Collection of Treaties," presumably a Turkish compilation, and that even if it were not extant its terms were confirmed by subsequent Treaties.

He then goes on to explain how it is that parts of Kurdistan and some of the Kurds remain in the hands of Persia. He declares that Naib-es-Sultaneh profited by the state of confusion into which Turkey was thrown by her disastrous wars with Russia, the suppression of the Janissaries, the institution of the Nizam Jedid, and other reforms, to seduce the Kurds and annex Turkish territory. But now the Kurds have returned to their ancient allegiance to the Sultan.

Let the Persian Commission recognize, he says, that Persia never got any profit out of the Kurds at the best of times, and delimitate the frontier according to Taher's views, and then the golden age will return.

Without a copy of the Treaty of 1639 I cannot say whether Taher quotes correctly from it, or rather from the Turkish version, which, he says, is extant; but his history is certainly wrong when he concludes that the possessions of Turkey in this quarter had not shrunk prior to that date. Between 1554 and 1635, when Murad IV's Persian campaigns began, the Persians had recovered at least Erivan and Bagdad taken from them by Suleiman the Great, and these places were again annexed to the Ottoman Empire in 1635 and 1638 respectively.

It becomes painfully apparent from a perusal of the Persian and Turkish notes that a solution of the frontier muddle is as far off as ever. Muhteshem clings desperately to the Persian interpretation of Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzeroum and the restoration of the *status quo* frontier. Taher repudiates that interpretation, declares that Article 3 has no bearing whatever on the frontier north of Zohab to Bayazid now in dispute, and claims that the Treaty of 1639 gives to Turkey "all the Sanjaks of Kurdistan"—a very elastic phrase. In this claim, which expands in his hands into the contention that all Kurds wherever found are Turkish, he is certainly not borne out by the Treaty of 1822, though it talks of the non-interference of Persia with the territory of Kurdistan; for this Treaty distinctly provides for the passing of tribes (Kurdish) from each side of the frontier to the other, thus implying that there were Kurds who remained Persian, and Article 8 of the Treaty of Erzeroum of 1847 confirms this.

Muhteshem tells me that he will propose to Taher that they submit the interpretation of Article 3 to their Governments. Even should the Persian Government consent to negotiate without reference to this Article, I do not see how a solution can be extracted from the chaos of vague and defective ancient Treaties until more or less disinterested third parties step in to decide the question for the litigants.

Meanwhile Taher's pretensions continue to grow. In his last note he talks of differences of religion being the principle on which the division of territory should be based, Sunnis being Turkish and Shias Persian. Now, there are Sunni villages scattered about the plain of Urumia and elsewhere, and if Taher is correctly reported he has assured the inhabitants of some of them that they will shortly pass under the benevolent sway of the Sultan. In conversation last week he informed me, for the first time in so many words, that the district of Anzel, which stretches from Baradost to the lake in a north-easterly direction, and part at least of Salmas, belonged to Turkey. I remarked that as Urumia had already been cut off from communication with the rest of Azerbaijan to the south, if Anzel went too the only road to Tabreez would be across the lake. He replied that this could not be helped, and that the Commission would decide as to the ownership of these districts. His *entourage* have even commenced to throw doubts on the rights of Persia to the town of Urumia itself, and Dervish Pasha's map will soon become obsolete as an indication of the extreme limits of Turkish claims.

The Kurds, who have consistently been put forward by the Turks to prepare the way for them, have already begun to inform the inhabitants of Anzel that they are annexed to Turkey and must give in their submission, and though Taher, when pressed by Muhteshem, affects to repudiate these intrigues, they are not without significance in the light of past events.

The relations between the two Commissions are as strained as ever. The military members of the Turkish Commission are barely on speaking terms with Taher, and affect to take no interest whatever in the negotiations.

Taher is reported to have given out among the Turkish military officers in Tergavar

that the frontier question is practically settled, that the Shah has given way to all the demands of Turkey, and that only Muhteshem's personal obstinacy prevents an immediate solution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[30048]

No. 414.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 366. Secret.)
(Extract.)

St. Petersburg, August 18, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of an *aide-mémoire*, with its inclosure, which I have received from the Russian Government in regard to railway construction in Persia.

Inclosure 1 in No. 414.

Aide-mémoire communicated by Russian Government, August 2 (15), 1908.

LE Gouvernement Britannique ayant proposé au Gouvernement Impérial de procéder d'un commun accord à la construction en Perse de chemins de fer, qui, partant du point terminus du réseau Russe à Djoulfa, arriveraient à Mohammerah, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur d'informer l'Ambassade Royale qu'il accepte cette proposition en principe, et qu'il est prêt à entrer dans un échange de vues avec l'Ambassade concernant les modalités pratiques de la mise à exécution de la dite proposition.

Dans cet ordre d'idées il paraît désirable d'avoir en vue les considérations suivantes:—

L'Ambassade n'ignore pas qu'il existe une entente entre le Gouvernement Russe et celui du Schah, en vertu de laquelle aucune Concession de Chemin de Fer ne saurait être délivrée en Perse avant l'année 1910.

Considérant l'importance qu'aurait pour le Gouvernement Britannique ainsi que pour la Perse la faculté de procéder sans retard à l'établissement d'une Concession de Chemin de Fer, le Gouvernement Russe serait disposé à se désister et à autoriser le Gouvernement Persan à se libérer, dès à présent, de la stipulation susmentionnée.

La question des chemins de fer présente sans doute pour la Perse un caractère particulièrement urgent, mais en même temps la situation économique actuelle de ce pays ne lui permet pas de songer à faire face aux dépenses exigées par une entreprise de lignes ferrées.

Or, de son côté, le Ministère Impérial des Finances ne se considère pas en mesure de participer sous forme de capitaux à la construction de chemins de fer en Perse. Aussi sommes-nous prêts à aller au-devant de la proposition Anglaise, si le côté financier de la question peut être réglé avec l'aide de l'Angleterre.

Il importe également d'avoir en vue qu'à la suite de difficultés financières où se trouve à présent le Schah, la question d'un important emprunt extérieur pour la Perse nous semble intimement liée à celle d'une Concession de Chemin de Fer, et que ces deux questions demandent à être résolues simultanément.

Sans entrer dans les détails de la direction des lignes ferrées à construire, le Ministère Impérial estime que celles qui seront établies dans les régions de la Perse reconnues par l'entente Russo-Anglaise de 1907 comme réservées plus particulièrement aux intérêts économiques Russes, devront servir au maintien et au développement de ces intérêts.

Pour répondre à ce but, la ligne, qui partirait de Djoulfa vers Mohammerah, devrait être jointe avec Téhéran; cette capitale devrait être reliée à Recht et à Enzeli, où la construction d'un bon port terminus s'impose. De plus, il faut envisager la nécessité de construire un chemin de fer entre Askhabad et Méched. L'ordre dans lequel on procéderait à la construction des diverses lignes dans les régions sus-nommées, de même que la direction de ces lignes, devront correspondre aux intérêts Russes auxquels celles-ci touchent.

Il importerait également de rechercher, d'un commun accord, les mesures aptes à empêcher que la construction du chemin de fer proposé par le Gouvernement

Britannique jusqu'à Mohammerah ne vienne nuire à la situation commerciale ou économique, acquise actuellement à la Russie dans les régions mentionnées plus haut.

Il sera probablement nécessaire d'examiner, à ce point de vue, la question des tarifs à appliquer aux marchandises sur ladite ligne.

En terminant il paraît intéressant de rappeler les propositions confidentielles qui ont été faites à l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Londres, de la connaissance de feu Lord Salisbury, au sujet d'un Accord Russo-Anglais concernant la construction d'un réseau de chemins de fer en Perse, et, en premier lieu, de la ligne Enzeli-Mohammerah.

De l'avis du Ministère Impérial, ces propositions, consignées dans une lettre confidentielle de Sir H. Drummond Wolff du 20 Janvier, 1900, ci-jointe en copie, pourraient devenir, *mutatis mutandis*, le point de départ de l'échange de vues projeté.

Inclosure 2 in No. 414.

Sir H. Drummond Wolff to M. de Staal.

(Confidentielle.)

Londres, le 20 Janvier, 1900.

L'IDÉE que j'ai tâché hier de développer n'est pas d'origine récente. Il y a trente-six ans que j'ai écrit une brochure sur l'arbitrage dont vous avez reçu un exemplaire. Depuis douze ans, lors de ma mission en Perse, je me suis convaincu que l'événement le plus favorable à la consolidation de la paix du monde serait une entente entre nos deux pays, et je crois que vous avez en main les preuves des souhaits que dans ce but j'ai exprimés à différentes reprises.

Il m'a semblé qu'un effort sur une grande échelle ne pourrait réussir d'emblée. Il y a trop de points à ménager. D'un autre côté un apaisement réalisé dans certaines limites d'une façon bienveillante amènerait peu à peu à une entente plus étendue. Donc je crois que le foyer le plus indiqué pour le commencement d'un tel projet serait la Perse. Là la Russie et la Grande-Bretagne sont plus ou moins limitrophes. Là elles ont des intérêts en commun et là elles pourraient initier un rapprochement au lieu de perpétuer une politique de tension et de méfiance qui me paraît être le vrai fonds de l'inquiétude générale. La Russie et l'Angleterre ont réciproquement jusqu'à présent représenté le protagoniste et l'antagoniste du drame. Leurs différences aplanies, le monde entier en ressentirait le bienfait.

L'objet de la Russie paraît être d'atteindre un débouché commercial sur le Golfe Persique. Cet objet est légitime et louable pourvu qu'il soit mené d'une façon paisible, et je ne vois aucune raison qui empêcherait l'Angleterre de prêter son concours à un projet ainsi ébauché.

La route la plus directe entre la Caspienne et le Golfe est celle de Enzeli à Mohammerah, qui est le meilleur port sur la côte. Un chemin de fer entre ces deux villes offrirait à la Russie des avantages plus importants que ceux obtenus pour le Royaume-Uni par l'ouverture du Canal de Suez.

Le voyage de Londres à Bombay est, en milles Anglais—

Par la voie du Cap ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9,545
Par le Canal ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7,053
Gain ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,492

La route de Moscou à Karachi—

Par Odessa et Suez est de ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,806
Par Enzeli-Mohammerah ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,330
Gain ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,976

L'économie de route de Bakou à Karachi est plus remarquable.

La distance par Batoum et le Canal est de 5,134 milles, mais par voie de Mohammerah 2,035 milles, ce qui représente un gain de 3,099 milles—une économie de 42 milles par terre et de 3,057 milles par mer.

Ainsi, pour le commerce, il est évident que le tracé est d'un grand avantage pour la Russie.

Les résultats financiers obtenus par la nouvelle chaussée de Recht à Kasvin ont démontré le vaste mouvement entre la Russie et la capitale de la Perse. Le coût du

chemin de fer de Enzeli à Mohammerah, avec des embranchements à Téhéran et Kermanshah, et des travaux de port aux deux termini, serait, en chiffres ronds, 10,000,000*l.*, un chiffre peut-être un peu exagéré, mais il y a raison de croire qu'avec la bonne volonté et la coopération de la Russie et de l'Angleterre, il pourrait être obtenu à un taux très modéré.

Le service d'un emprunt ainsi émis ne dépasserait pas le montant par an de 350,000*l.* En se rapportant au revenu provenant des péages seuls, sans les frais de transport de la route carrossable de Reht à Kasvin, on peut se réaliser les rentrées du chemin de fer. Sur un capital de 340,000*l.* pour les 100 milles Anglais le produit annuel des péages monte à 100,000*l.*, ou presque 30 pour cent.

Il serait prématuré au moment actuel de poser les conditions qui naturellement seraient à modifier après discussion. Tout ce que je puis dire est l'idée que j'ai conçue personnellement quant aux moyens nécessaires pour l'exécution de ce projet.

Je crois qu'une Convention serait nécessaire entre les trois Puissances intéressées, c'est-à-dire, l'Angleterre, la Russie, et la Perse. Les bases principales de cet instrument seraient—

1. La neutralisation de la Perse.
2. La construction d'un réseau de chemin de fer selon certains principes.
3. Une Commission Administrative de trois membres à être désignés respectivement par les trois Parties Contractantes.
4. La construction en premier lieu de la ligne Enzeli-Mohammerah.
5. L'institution de certains droits de transit consacrés au service d'un emprunt garanti par les trois Puissances.
6. Ces droits seront perçus aux extrémités de la ligne avec le concours des Consuls Russes et Anglais.

Voici l'explication des vues que je vous ai exprimées hier. Quoique personnelles, elles sont connues et je ne pêche pas contre la discipline en vous les communiquant.

A mon idée, depuis quelque temps en Russie ainsi qu'en Angleterre et aux Indes, on a vu poindre des symptômes de revirement dans l'opinion publique, et on y reconnaît que les sentiments de conciliation et de confiance seront plus raisonnables et moins coûteux des deux côtés qu'une attitude continuelle d'éveil et de précaution.

Le modus vivendi vaut mieux que "qui vive."

Je ne renonce pas à l'espoir de recevoir de vous une lueur de réciprocité. Nous comprenons ici le principe de *do ut des*, mais pour le mettre en œuvre il faut connaître les équivalents voulus.

Je vous prie, &c.
(Signé) H. DRUMMOND WOLFE.

[30050]

No. 415.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 369.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, August 19, 1908.

M. ISVOLSKY remarked to me yesterday that he was perturbed as to the continued encroachments of the Turkish troops into localities lying on the Persian side of the neutral zone. He had explained to me on a former occasion the seriousness of the question, from a strategical point of view, so far as it affected Russia; but there was also to be considered the fact that the Turks were departing from the promises which they had frequently given, and were taking measures which the two mediating Powers could hardly overlook and ignore. He said that he had telegraphed to Count Benckendorff to ascertain whether you considered the moment opportune for some representations at Constantinople; and in the meantime he had instructed M. Zinoview to speak very seriously to the Sublime Porte on the subject. He thought that certainly some steps should be taken to check the continued advance of the Turkish troops, but he did not know if the moment was a favourable one for adopting such a course. I told him that, of course, you would give a reply to his communication through Count Benckendorff, but personally I should have thought that the new party in power at Constantinople would be more ready than their predecessors to listen to reasonable representations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30051]

No. 416.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 370.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, August 19, 1908.

M. TCHARYKOFF held his first reception to-day on taking over charge of the Foreign Office during the absence of M. Isvolsky. A new departure has been taken in the case of M. Tcharykoff, as he told me that he had received full power to deal with foreign questions during the absence of his Minister, and he has also, I was informed, received the privilege of access to the Emperor, when occasion should demand it. He can, therefore, speak with more authority than his predecessors in his post were perhaps in a position to do.

M. Tcharykoff, in conversing with regard to Persia, stated that the situation at Tabreez was still uncertain and critical, but otherwise the rest of Persia seemed to be in a fairly pacific condition. He nevertheless feared that there were people in the immediate *entourage* of the Shah who would endeavour to induce His Majesty to refrain from giving effect to the engagements which he had undertaken as to the convocation of the Assembly, and it might be necessary to take steps to counteract, as far as possible, reactionary intrigues of that nature. He therefore considered that it would be wise if the British and Russian Governments were to come to some understanding as to reminding the Shah of the promises which he had given.

M. Tcharykoff said that it was essential that there should be no return to a reactionary policy, which would lead possibly to disaster to the Shah himself, and which would also cause grave embarrassments to the two Governments if the country were to be again plunged into anarchy and disorder. He thought that a joint warning might be conveyed by the two Representatives to the Shah personally, to the effect that the two Governments relied upon him to fulfil his engagements and to convoke an Assembly on the date which had been fixed. He believed that a Special Commission was at present studying an electoral law, and therefore it was not advisable, perhaps, to deliver any message at the present moment. He would be glad, however, if you would take the suggestion into consideration, so that when the moment arrived it could be carried into execution. He considered that perhaps the step might be taken on the arrival of Mr. Barclay, which I told him would probably be towards the end of next month. M. Tcharykoff observed that the two Governments had been largely instrumental in procuring the departure from Persia of the Zil-es-Sultan, and the withdrawal of this personage was undoubtedly a service to the Shah, for which he should be grateful.

I told M. Tcharykoff that I was sure that you would agree with his view, that any return to a reactionary policy or the suspension of constitutional rights would be in the highest degree unfortunate, and that I would have pleasure in conveying his suggestion to you. If you concur in the eventual presentation of a joint reminder or warning to the Shah, I might ask M. Tcharykoff if he would draw up the terms of a message which I could submit to you for your observations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30054]

No. 417.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 373.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1908.

I CALLED on M. Tcharykoff this afternoon and informed him that since I had last seen him the Grand Vizier had given assurances that the Turkish troops would be withdrawn from the localities which they had occupied to the east of the neutral zone on the Turco-Persian frontier, and I added that the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople was satisfied with these assurances. In these circumstances, perhaps the Russian Government would agree with His Majesty's Government that there would be no necessity for the British and Russian Ambassadors to take any further action in the matter for the moment. M. Tcharykoff said that he perfectly concurred with this view, and he agreed that the Ambassadors should defer taking any further steps at the Sublime Porte.

He added that the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires had called on him this morning and spoken at some length in regard to the frontier question. Fahreddin Bey, who was, as

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I doubtless knew, an enthusiastic Young Turk, had told him that his Government were determined to settle the frontier difficulty with Persia finally and amicably, and not only would withdraw their troops, but would set seriously to work to delimitate and lay down a frontier satisfactory to both parties. They would wish, to this end, to profit by the friendly mediation of the two Governments of Russia and Great Britain, who would doubtless do their best to assist in obtaining a solution. It was, Fahreddin Bey mentioned, essential that the two neighbouring Mussulman Powers should live in the closest amity and be bound together by the most intimate ties, and every effort should be made by each of them to remove all causes of difference. It was true that the Persians were Shiabs and the Turks Sunnis, but they were nevertheless both Moslems, and this was the main point.

M. Tcharykoff observed to me that this statement on the part of Fahreddin Bey breathed the spirit of liberal Pan-Islamism, but was most satisfactory in respect to the frontier question. I inquired whether the *Chargé d'Affaires* was speaking under instructions, as, if so, his observations were especially pleasing. M. Tcharykoff said that Fahreddin Bey did not give him to understand that he was instructed by his Government to hold the language which he had employed, but he did not doubt that he represented the views of his Government, and was perhaps in a position to speak more freely than the Grand Vizier would feel disposed to do towards the Ambassadors.

While deferring any further action at Constantinople, M. Tcharykoff was of opinion that the opportunity might be taken for the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran to make an identic communication to the Shah narrating the new departure which the Ottoman Government were prepared to undertake, and to explain to His Majesty that the felicitous change which was being effected in Turkish policy towards Persia was due to the constant efforts of the Governments of Great Britain and Russia to obtain a solution of the frontier difficulty. He laid stress on the importance of the communication being identic, so as to once more exhibit the solidarity between the two Governments.

I told M. Tcharykoff that I should be obliged if he would put his ideas into the form of a Memorandum which I could submit to you, and I would beg leave to remark that he should be careful not to go beyond what we were sure were the official intentions of the Ottoman Government. The statements of Fahreddin Bey were most interesting, but we were not assured that his Government would solicit our mediation or would be prepared to advance as far as their *Chargé d'Affaires* had adumbrated. We must be on perfectly sure and safe ground in that respect. The Persian Ambassador would of course have already informed his Government of the assurances which the Grand Vizier had given.

M. Tcharykoff replied that he would bear what I had said in mind, and would let me have a Memorandum in regard to the proposed communication to the Shah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30055]

No. 418.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 374.)

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1908.

Sir,

I TOLD M. Tcharykoff that His Majesty's Government would be disposed, should the necessity arise, to convey, through the Representatives at Tehran, a message to the Shah warning him that he must act up to his promises and convoke the Assembly on the date which had been fixed. My Government, I added, would be glad if he would draw up a form of communication which would be suitable to the occasion, and I would lose no time in submitting it to you. I remarked that perhaps it might be as well, when the two Governments had come to an agreement as to the terms of the communication, if the moment for its presentation were left to the two Representatives to decide, as they would be the best judges whether the circumstances called for its delivery.

M. Tcharykoff said that he quite agreed, and would be happy to draw up a draft of a communication. He said that his object was chiefly to strengthen the Shah's hands against the reactionary elements which surrounded him, and who were prompting him to defer indefinitely the convocation of an Assembly. His Majesty himself was sincerely desirous of observing faithfully the Constitution, but he had strong forces to combat. It was to me a novel appreciation of the situation which

M. Tcharykoff here described, of a liberal-minded Shah struggling against reactionary elements and anxious to convoke an Assembly whose predecessor he had blown into the air.

M. Tcharykoff informed me that he trusted and believed that the troubles at Tabreez, at present the only black spot in Persia, would shortly be settled without further bloodshed. The departure of the Zil-es-Sultan to Europe would remove one of the chief causes of the recent troubles, and he had heard that the Prince, before leaving Tehran, had thrown himself at the feet of the Shah and had assured His Majesty that he was his most loyal and faithful subject, and had never entertained the slightest desire to cause his Sovereign the least inconvenience.

I should mention that M. Tcharykoff alluded to the necessity of increasing the Cossack Brigade in Persia. He said that they constituted the only trustworthy force in the whole Empire on whom reliance could be placed for the maintenance of order, and that 1,500 men were too few for this duty. I evaded entering into this delicate question, but I should not be surprised if we were to hear more of it later.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30056]

No. 419.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 375. Secret.)

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1908.

Sir,

I MENTIONED to M. Tcharykoff that I had telegraphed to you a summary of the Memorandum with which I had been furnished in respect to projected railways in Persia, and that I could inform him that you were awaiting the full text with interest, but that an examination into the details could not be made until October, when the Ministers of the Government had reassembled in London after their holidays.

M. Tcharykoff asked what impression the Memorandum had made upon me. I told him that I was hardly in a position to give an opinion of any value, but that I thought that the question of a loan, in any case, would require careful consideration. There were many points connected with that question which would have to be carefully weighed, the amount of the loan, guarantees as to mode of expenditure, and so forth, and naturally the advice of M. Bizot in this matter would be of importance. M. Tcharykoff remarked that a Railway Concession without a loan might be difficult to obtain, as the Shah would expect to receive something if he were to be induced to give a Concession. As it seemed inadvisable to discuss these matters before I am in possession of the views of His Majesty's Government on the whole question, I thought it better to turn the conversation on to other subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[30062]

No. 420.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 381.)

St. Petersburg, August 26, 1908.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 373 of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a draft identic communication which M. Tcharykoff suggests should be made to the Persian Government by the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran in regard to the Turco-Persian dispute. As he considers that the communication should be handed in as soon as possible, I telegraphed a translation of the document this afternoon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 420.

Draft Identic Note communicated to Sir A. Nicolson by M. Tcharykoff (for transmission to Persian Government).

LES Cabinets de Saint-Petersbourg et de Londres, ayant appris que le mouvement en avant des troupes Turques sur le territoire Persan, dans la direction du Lac d'Ouroumia, continuait à se produire, ont demandé à être éclairés à ce sujet par l'entremise de leurs Ambassades à Constantinople.

C'est avec une sincère satisfaction qu'ils se trouvent à même d'informer à présent le Gouvernement Persan que le Gouvernement Ottoman leur a donné les assurances les plus formelles que les troupes Turques qui ont pénétré sur le territoire Persan au delà de la zone reconnue comme devant être l'objet d'une délimitation seront rappelées sans retard, et que la Porte est résolue à arriver à une solution amicale des difficultés avec la Perse.

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de Sa Majesté le Schah, la Légation de Russie (de la Grande-Bretagne) se plaît à croire que le Gouvernement Persan continuera à user, de son côté, de la modération nécessaire, et pourra, dès lors, aboutir, sans la médiation de la Russie et de l'Angleterre, à une solution définitive de son litige de frontière avec le Gouvernement Ottoman.

[30067]

No. 421.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 386.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, August 27, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of an *aide-mémoire* which I have received from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in regard to the exchange of telegraph lines in Persia. The Memorandum, it appears, urges, chiefly for technical reasons, that Russian signallers should be maintained at Birjand and Nasratabad, and British signallers at Meshed and Tehran; but it intimates in another paragraph that each Government should withdraw from the zone of the other their mechanics and inspectors, and leave only telegraphists properly so-called. There is a curious hint also that if we insist on our view that each Power should completely withdraw all employés from the zone of the other, we should logically have to withdraw British employés on that section of the Indo-European line which passes through the Russian zone. This no doubt is inserted to exercise a little gentle pressure upon us.

The question, in a few words, is now whether we should continue to insist on the withdrawal of all Russian signallers, &c., both from the termini and the intermediate stations on our portion of the Seistan line, or whether we should consent to permit a Russian signaller to remain at Birjand and another at Nasratabad. This is a question which I can only respectfully leave to be decided by authorities in London. If we agree with the Russian request, it will be desirable to embody in any Arrangement which may be made that both parties agree to withdraw all employés, such as mechanics and inspectors, and that only two British signallers remain at the termini of Meshed and Tehran respectively, and only two Russian signallers at Birjand and Nasratabad respectively. Perhaps it would be better also to specify in the Arrangement the exact hours at which Russian and British signallers should have daily access to the offices of the other; and, in fact, I should be grateful if I might be furnished with a draft Arrangement drawn up by those expert in such matters which I might discuss with the Russian Government.

It would now be of interest to know what progress has been made at Tehran as to obtaining the consent of the Persian Government in principle to the exchange, and I would submit that perhaps an inquiry might be made by telegraph. It would be well to have the question finally settled without much delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 421.

Aide-mémoire.

LE Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères n'a pas manqué de soumettre à un examen attentif la proposition du Gouvernement Britannique concernant l'échange des lignes télégraphiques de Méched-Téhéran et de Méched-Seistan et formant l'objet de la note de Mr. O'Beirne du 9 (22) Mai, année courante.

Cette proposition tend à l'établissement d'un régime selon lequel le Gouvernement Britannique s'engagerait à retirer tous ses employés télégraphiques de la ligne Méched-Téhéran et de la section Méched-Khaf de la ligne Méched-Seistan; tandis que la Russie consentirait, de son côté, à faire de même par rapport à la section Khaf-Nousratabad de la dernière de ces lignes. Le Cabinet de Londres ajoute que, le cas échéant, les télégraphistes respectifs devraient être chargés de la transmission prompte et exacte des télégrammes expédiés par leur entremise par les Agents et les sujets de chacune des deux Puissances. Le Gouvernement Britannique fait observer, en outre, qu'un pareil Arrangement répondrait plus strictement à l'esprit de la Convention du 18 (31) Août, 1907, et servirait à écarter tout motif de différend.

A ce propos le Gouvernement Impérial croit pouvoir prétendre que le régime actuellement en vigueur sur la ligne Méched-Seistan n'a, de sa connaissance, présenté jusqu'ici aucun inconvénient ni causé de malentendus quant à la répartition des heures de travail entre les télégraphistes Russes et Anglais et au service régulier de la ligne.

En conséquence, il semblerait que l'état des choses établi pourrait être maintenu à l'avenir sans aucune crainte qu'il puisse nuire en quoi que ce soit aux intérêts respectifs de l'Angleterre et de la Russie. Il reste toutefois sousentendu que ce maintien n'exclut pas la nécessité pour chacun des Gouvernements de rappeler ses mécaniciens et ses surveillants de la zone réservée à l'autre par l'Arrangement du 18 (31) Août, 1907, et de n'y garder que des télégraphistes proprement dits. Ainsi, l'Angleterre conserverait les deux télégraphistes qui se trouvent actuellement aux points extrêmes de la ligne Méched-Téhéran, et la Russie continuerait à en avoir un à Nousratabad et l'autre à Birdjand.

Il est à noter, entre autres, que malgré la révocation des télégraphistes Anglais des lignes Téhéran-Méched et Méched-Khaf, il en resterait quand même quelques-uns dans la sphère réservée à la Russie par la Convention du 18 (31) Août, 1907, étant donné qu'une partie du télégraphe Indo-Européen traverse la zone Russe, et que, par conséquent, l'idée exprimée dans la note de Mr. O'Beirne du 9 (22) Mai de retirer complètement tous les employés télégraphiques de chacune des Puissances de la sphère de l'autre ne saurait être réalisée par le seul fait de la révocation des télégraphistes Anglais des deux lignes ci-dessus mentionnées.

En outre, les sujets Russes à Nousratabad et Birdjand se trouveraient placés, par suite de la révocation des télégraphistes Russes de ces deux points, dans des conditions moins favorables qu'à présent, vu qu'ils seraient privés de la possibilité d'expédier des télégrammes en langue et caractères Russes, les employés Anglais ne connaissant point cette langue. Il y aurait également des inconvénients pour les Anglais dans la sphère Russe, car, bien que nos employés soient à même de transmettre des télégrammes en caractères Latins, ils pourraient facilement en altérer le sens, ne connaissant point l'Anglais. Cet état des choses ne manquerait pas d'entraîner, de part et d'autre, des plaintes bien fondées et des fréquentes réclamations.

Les considérations ci-dessus énoncées portent le Gouvernement Impérial à croire que le maintien des télégraphistes Russes à Nousratabad et Birdjand, ainsi que ceux de l'Angleterre à Méched et Téhéran, serait de la plus grande utilité pour les deux Gouvernements. En conséquence le Ministère Impérial ne saurait se départir du point de vue exposé dans son aide-mémoire du 30 Mars, année courante, c'est-à-dire qu'il considère que le régime le plus équitable à adopter par rapport aux lignes Téhéran-Méched et Méched-Seistan serait d'abandonner la première d'entre elles, ainsi que la section Méched-Khaf de la seconde, à l'Administration Russe avec admission au service de la ligne à des heures fixes des télégraphistes Anglais à Téhéran et Méched, tandis que la section Khaf-Méched ressortirait de l'Administration Anglaise aux mêmes conditions quant à l'admission des télégraphistes Russes au service de cette ligne.

Le Gouvernement Impérial aime à espérer que le Cabinet de Londres voudra bien apprécier à leur juste valeur les considérations ci-dessus exposées.

Saint-Petersbourg, le 13 (26) Août, 1908.

[30098]

No. 422.

Sir F. Lascelles to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 187. Commercial.)

Sir,

Berlin, August 26, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 183, Commercial, of the 20th instant, I have the honour to report that the German correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt" contributes to that paper this morning a leading article on the subject of German interests in Arabistan, the gist of which is as follows:—

The article opens with an account of Schuster, the once flourishing and luxurious centre of Southern Persia, and the now half-ruined, deserted village which stands midway between North Persia and the Persian Gulf, and is situated right in the middle of the naphtha district. The naphtha district may be divided into three parts: the first, from the northern frontier of Persia to Schuster, with Mesched Sulciman as its centre; this part is, however, rendered at present valueless commercially owing to the difficulties of access; the second is the district from Kalehur-Dschorn-Gazi, and to the south of this district comes the third zone from Chordin-Ram-Hormus. This zone is in the hands of the Anglo-Indian Burmah Oil Company, who are not sinking much capital in the business, having no competition to fight against, and are merely boring for an amount of naphtha sufficient to justify their Concession.

Concessions in Persia are largely a question of "backschisch," and the writer asks whether there is not an excellent opportunity for Germany to step in and obtain naphtha Concessions in the central, or even the northern zone. It seems unlikely that England will seek for any further Concessions here. Why, then, should Germany not create a new civilizing factor in Southern Persia? She might well make the effort, firstly by exploiting the unreclaimed naphtha springs, and secondly by the introduction of German goods through the independent agency of the Hamburg Steam-ship Company or the firm of Wöckhaus in Mohammerah. Germany cannot compete with Manchester ware and English cottons, but why should she not try importing preserves, chemical products, or German sugar. At present no German goods are visible in the bazaars, only German beer and German enamel.

England has, indeed, acquired a preponderant influence in South-West Persia, where the house of Lynch is supreme; but the principle of the open door must be maintained. Germany has no wish to oust England on the Tigris or on the Karun, but she demands freedom for her commercial and industrial activity in this neutral zone.

I have, &c.
(For Sir F. Lascelles),
(Signed) CRANLEY.

[30143]

No. 423.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 114.)

Sir,

Marienbad, August 27, 1908.

I HAD an opportunity yesterday of having a short conversation with M. Isvolsky upon near Eastern affairs. In discussing the action of the Austro-Hungarian Government with regard to the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian officers from the Uskub "sector," he said that the fact that Baron d'Aehrenthal had taken the initiative in this matter without previous consultation with Russia would seem to point to a desire on his part to steal a march upon the other Powers and curry favour with the Young Turkish party. The present modification of his policy in this matter was, however, a proof that reflection had brought prudence, as he had evidently now realized the inexpediency of abandoning with such haste a "sector" which the Austro-Hungarian Government had formerly been at such pains to obtain.

M. Isvolsky then branched off to what he termed the amazing and inexplicable conduct of Baron d'Aehrenthal at the end of last and the beginning of the present year. He stated that in September 1907 he and Baron d'Aehrenthal had come to an absolutely full agreement upon a draft scheme of reforms, and that during its discussion not a word had been said of the Sanjak Railway. A month afterwards, however, he (M. Isvolsky) had heard that Baron d'Aehrenthal was working secretly at Constanti-

nople to obtain the Concession for that railway, and was offering, in exchange for that Concession, to withdraw Austro-Hungarian support from the judicial reform scheme. He had submitted this report to the Czar, telling His Majesty at the same time that he considered it quite incredible. Only a short time afterwards the judicial reform project was wrecked by the German Ambassador, with the tacit consent of the Austro-Hungarian Representative. In January the demand for the Sanjak Railway Concession was announced to the Delegations, and the Sultan's *Irade* was issued almost simultaneously.

By these manoeuvres Baron d'Aehrenthal had proved himself a short-sighted and inept director of foreign policy, and had, moreover, notwithstanding his long residence in St. Petersburg, shown a singular ignorance of Russia. He had evidently looked upon her as so effete and so broken by her unsuccessful war, and the revolutionary movement which had followed, that she would meekly bow her head and accept, even while resenting, the new Austro-Hungarian policy. He had, however, made a grievous mistake, as he (M. Isvolsky) had been able at once to bring forward another railway scheme, and turn to other Powers for support in the work of reform which the Austro-Hungarian Government had so wantonly impeded. In this action he had been backed up by public opinion, of the existence of which Baron d'Aehrenthal had apparently been quite ignorant.

Turning again to the Young Turkish movement, M. Isvolsky said that he had considerable confidence in its ultimate success, and he welcomed it as being in all probability the means of saving Great Britain and Russia from what might have proved a complicated and perhaps dangerous *impasse*. He had not had much confidence in his scheme of reforms, which would probably at every step meet with obstruction from Austria-Hungary and Germany. He therefore thought the international situation had been much simplified by the new movement in Turkey, and he wished it every success. He did not think, for many obvious reasons, that it would meet with the same cordial welcome in Germany. As regards Austria-Hungary, her connection with Germany had not contributed much towards inspiring the Young Turk party with confidence, and it was evidently a knowledge of this fact which had led Baron d'Aehrenthal to display such a feverish desire to ingratiate himself with the promoters of the new movement. He was not of the opinion that Baron d'Aehrenthal was endeavouring, by a conciliatory policy, to prepare the way for the annexation of the occupied provinces. That idea was of course always in the minds of Austro-Hungarian statesmen, but it was an European, and not an Austro-Turkish question; and he felt sure that Baron d'Aehrenthal would think more than twice before raising such a question at a moment when it was evidently desirable for every Government to avoid all dangerous and complicated issues.

You will have seen, however, from my despatch No. 111 of the 20th instant, that whatever may be the view of the Austro-Hungarian Government on this question, public opinion is being turned towards the idea that the time has now come for occupation to be transformed into annexation.

M. Isvolsky then said that he had no doubt his views and hopes with regard to the Young Turkey movement would be shared by you, and he added his conviction that any counter movement in Egypt would be easily dealt with by His Majesty's Government.

As regards Persia, M. Isvolsky made a few interesting remarks. He said that the only anxiety he felt was relative to the position at Tabreez. It was true that Russian interests were being seriously affected by the badness of trade, and that Russian subjects were clamouring for protection, but he was earnestly desirous of avoiding anything which might savour of intervention. As soon, however, as order was restored it would be absolutely necessary, in the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention, to hasten on with the building of railways and the opening up of the country to trade.

The following remark was not made to me, but to the "Times" correspondent, Mr. Steed, who kindly reported it to me:—

"I am delighted to say that the Anglo-Russian Convention has taken deep root in Russian public opinion, and now enjoys general support. Though not universally popular, it has come at least to be regarded as a permanent and valuable factor in Russian foreign policy. Had no Agreement been concluded, Russia would certainly by this time have had one or two army corps in Persia with what effect upon Anglo-Russian relations and upon the general European situation can easily be imagined. Happily that danger has been avoided."

In connection with M. Isvolsky's remarks with regard to the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian officers and the attitude of Austria-Hungary towards the Young Turk movement, I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation by Mr. Crackanthorpe of a leading article in the "Neue Freie Presse" dealing with these subjects.*

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. E. GOSCHEN.

[30355]

No. 424.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 153.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 31, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 329 of the 29th instant. Turco-Persian frontier.

Your amendments to proposed identic communication meet with M. Tcharykoff's approval. With a view to losing as little time as possible he suggests that the Embassies at Constantinople and the Legations at Tehran should be informed by telegraph of the identic communication to be made, but that the Representatives at Tehran should be told that, as Embassies were being consulted, they were not to present it pending further instructions. M. Tcharykoff said that the Governments would thereby be enabled to obtain their respective Embassy's opinion as to the wording of the communication tallying with the facts of the case.

In conclusion, M. Tcharykoff informed me that he had received assurances from the newly appointed Turkish Ambassador, who had just arrived here, that the Turkish troops should be withdrawn, and that every effort would be made to arrive at an amicable settlement of the question.

[30356]

No. 425.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 154.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 31, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 327 of the 29th instant respecting Turkish escort for Tabreez.

I learn from M. Tcharykoff that no information on this subject has been received from the Russian Legation at Tehran. He would therefore wish to make inquiries to Russian Minister there before giving opinion as to the proposed instructions to Embassies. Seeing that the present desire of the Ottoman Government is to be as amiable as possible to the Persian Government, M. Tcharykoff personally doubts extremely if the Porte would be prepared to entertain such a proposal. He is inclined to think that, rather than take any steps at Constantinople, it might be preferable to bring local pressure to bear on the Turkish Embassy at Tehran to drop the matter, but after having heard from Russian Minister at Tehran he will give his final opinion.

[30357]

No. 426.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 155.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, August 31, 1908.

MY despatch No. 374 of the 22nd instant regarding Shah and Assembly.

Text of identic communication which it is proposed that Russian and British Representatives at Tehran should make to Shah is as follows:—

"As His Majesty the Shah has made known his intention of shortly publishing the new Regulations concerning the approaching legislative elections the Minister of Russia (British Chargé d'Affaires) considers, in conformity with the instructions from his Government, and without in any way wishing to intervene in the internal affairs of Persia, that it would be very desirable and opportune in the interests of the definitive pacification of the country and of trade, and of the general prosperity, that His Majesty the Shah would be pleased at the same time to announce that his decision to maintain

* Not printed.

the organic laws which he has granted to his Empire is irrevocable, and that the Assembly about to be elected will meet at Tehran on the 14th November."

The Shah had quite recently told the Russian Minister—so M. Tcharykoff explained to me—that it was his intention to shortly publish the regulation for the new elections. Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that British and Russian Representatives might now be placed in possession of proposed communication, which could then be made at the time and in the form which they considered most appropriate for the step.

[30350]

No. 427.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 246.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 31, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I received yesterday three telegrams from His Majesty's Consul-General at Urumia, of which following is general sense:—

If the Persian and Turkish Commissioners intend to resume local negotiations it is essential that they should settle the principles on which they intend to conduct them. The alleged ancient frontier which Sir C. Spring-Rice describes in his despatch No. 284 of the 9th November, 1906, is claimed by the Turkish Commissioner, who refuses to recognize either zone or *status quo*. He says that the Persian Government have already been warned to respect the frontier. Turkish Commissioner has received orders to return to Bitlis, of which he is Vali. He left Urumia on the 27th instant, leaving Daniel Pasha in charge of the Commission.

[30359]

No. 428.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 285.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 31, 1908.

NATIONAL Bank. Your telegram No. 285 of the 27th instant.

In the discussions of financial affairs which I have had with the Russian Minister and the Financial Adviser the question of the National Bank has not even been mentioned, and there has been nothing but speculative discussion on the subject between the French and Russian Ministers.

M. Lecomte is convinced that by preventing wasteful expenditure such a bank would form a valuable aid in reorganizing the finances of the country.

It appears that M. Lecomte must have been talking at random about the scheme, as he was approached by M. Rabino in regard to the question of managership of the bank.

M. Lecomte contends that the Persians would probably object to a bank under Anglo-Russian auspices, and M. Rabino's name would overcome their objections.

Provided effective control could be secured, which in the present circumstances appears difficult, I agree generally with the French Minister in this view, but I am of opinion that his estimate of Rabino's services is exaggerated.

M. de Hartwig thinks that it would be difficult to exclude German capital, which might be advanced through Persians indirectly to the bank.

Following is very confidential:—

M. de Hartwig is telegraphing to St. Petersburg again, complaining of M. Lecomte's attitude. He is much annoyed with him for having prematurely reported a proposal to his Government which has scarcely reached the stage of academic discussion. He also accuses him of indiscreet loquacity, which is calculated to arouse the German Legation to embarrassing activity.

No. 429.

[30448]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 286.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 31, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Constantinople telegram No. 242, last paragraph. M. de Hartwig and I concur in view expressed.

[30360]

No. 430.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 287.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 31, 1908.

HORMUZ oxide. Your telegram No. 228 of the 29th instant.

This morning I received a visit from Moin, who came to say that you had told Messrs. Ellinger that a German offer of 400,000*l.* had been made for the Concession. He added that the value of the Concession did not even approach this figure. Moin went on to say that the Shah would not give the Concession to the Germans, as he had been warned by the Russian Legation not to allow the Germans to acquire it.

In reply, I pointed out to Moin that his possession of the Concession would be secured by the formation of a British Company, but he was plainly averse to the proposal. He said he would discuss it with Ellinger when in Europe, where he is going shortly. From this it would appear that he is confident of keeping possession of the Concession but is anxious to have British support. It is my belief that he wants to keep the business entirely in his own hands, and that, while he does not wish to give us any hold over him by forming a British Company, he would probably hesitate to make a permanent arrangement with the Germans, which would be counter to the Shah's wishes.

[30361]

No. 431.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 288.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, August 31, 1908.

ST. PETERSBURGH telegram No. 150 respecting Turco-Persian frontier.

I have shown M. de Hartwig text of communication, but he has not received it yet from St. Petersburg. The phrase "without the mediation of Russia and Great Britain" is in our opinion to be deprecated, as in case of difficulties with the Porte the Persian Government would be encouraged to look elsewhere. M. de Hartwig, moreover, recalls that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople received a promise from the Grand Vizier that the mediation of the two Powers would be invoked by Turkey.

With a change of one figure "without" can be altered to "with." Has there been an error in transmission?

[30040]

No. 432.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 332.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 31, 1908.

ESCORT for Turkish Consulate at Tabreez.

Please inform Russian Government of the substance of Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 245 of the 30th instant, and say that it will now not be necessary to send the proposed instructions to the Ambassadors of the two Powers at Constantinople.

No. 433.

[29799]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 333.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, August 31, 1908.

WITH reference to the telegram No. 242 of the 28th instant from Constantinople, on the subject of the Turco-Persian frontier dispute.

I think the suggestion contained in the last paragraph is a wise one, but we will join the Russian Government in making the communication, with the proposed modifications, if they still consider it desirable.

[29764]

No. 434.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, requesting that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran may be instructed to bring the necessary pressure to bear on the Persian Government to allow the construction of your Company's shed at Shellilieh to proceed.

I am to inform you, in reply, that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to Mr. Marling for such action as he may find it possible to take in the matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30454]

No. 435.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 1.)

Sir,

India Office, August 31, 1908.

IN reply to your letter dated the 26th August, 1908, as to the proposed control by the Indo-European Telegraph Department of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to inform you that the necessary instructions, on the lines of his Memorandum, have now been telegraphed to the Director at Tehran by the Director-in-chief of the Department at this Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[30427]

No. 436.

The Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received September 1.)

Sir,

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street,
London, August 31, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to reply to your letter of the 26th instant, relative to the proposed repairs to the Godar bridge on the Ahwaz-Isfahan road.

The estimate made in Ahwaz of the sum required for the repairs recommended by the Consulting Engineer here, is obviously defective. We placed his drawings and specification before manufacturers who offered to supply the material for 160*l.* Tools and appliances for executing the work, and freight, will make the total cost at Ahwaz about 200*l.*, as we have already stated.

We are of opinion that the course proposed in our letter of the 24th instant is the best course to adopt in the interests of the Chiefs.

It appears to us that Captain Lorimer must be under some misapprehension in regard to our connection with the Ahwaz-Isfahan road. The road was built by us for account of the Chiefs without remuneration or profit of any kind—for the 6 per cent. interest payable to us on the debt does not constitute a profitable remuneration for capital employed in this way. We have incurred an additional expenditure of 3,000*l.* which the Chiefs have hitherto refused to recognize.

The khans receive the whole revenue obtained from the road. They starve repairs, yet even if they expended a proper part of the revenue on repairs, they would still be deriving a large profit from the road.

We have the right to demand that the road which is security for our advance of capital shall be kept in repair, and this is more in the interests of the khans than of ourselves, for if the road fails their revenue disappears, and they will have to pay their debt to us from other sources.

We therefore fail to understand Captain Lorimer when he states that the offer of 1,000 tomans for the work now necessary is generous, and that it would be a mistake on our part to refuse it. It is not generous in the khans to pay 200% in order to obtain a revenue of 3,000% or more, nor is it right that we should agree to spend 200% of their money if that sum will not suffice to do the work properly.

Whilst the khans are receiving revenue from the road far in excess of any expenditure needed in the repairs we think this Company should not be required to share in the expense of these repairs from which it receives no profit.

The only operation in connection with the road which is capable of yielding any profit at all is that of forwarding goods; and this business is open to any one who may choose to employ capital in it. The return, however, from this source is inadequate for the risk and labour involved.

I have, &c.
(For H. M. Maclean),
(Signed) J. N. R., Secretary.

[30459]

No. 437.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 156.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 1, 1908.

MR. MARLING'S telegram No. 288 of the 31st ultimo: Turco-Persian frontier. M. Tcharykoff, whom I had asked why he had inserted the phrase "without the mediation of Russia and Great Britain," gave me the following explanation. He said that he had inserted this phrase for the express purpose of indicating that, in case of need, the mediation was in the background. He hoped, however, that the frontier question would be solved without the necessity arising of having recourse to this mediation. This is, it seems to me, a reasonable explanation.

[30457]

No. 438.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 289.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 1, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports by telegraph that the authorities at Tehran evidently do not realize the gravity of the situation in Tabreez, which continues to get worse. Mr. Stevens states that he has good reason for believing that the revolutionary party is being encouraged to continue the struggle by the Turkish Consul-General. The revolutionaries will listen to no terms of peace unless the Constitution is guaranteed, elections ordered, and the Parliament reassembled. They have completely lost confidence in the Government. The forces of the Nationalist party are now 10,000. Yesterday the Local Assembly appointed a Committee to obtain funds from all Christians to aid in meeting the daily expenses towards keeping up the struggle, and Armenian revolutionaries are being pressed to take an active part.

A private warning has been received by Mr. Stevens not to go out alone, as the revolutionaries being desperate, they have determined to kill a foreigner or a Christian and so bring about European intervention.

Vice-Consul states that the sooner the Shah informs Tabreez of his intention to order elections, if he really does intend to do so, the better, the revolutionary leaders being too deeply involved to abandon the struggle now. Vice-Consul is of opinion that all Christians and Europeans may find themselves in imminent danger at any moment, as great excitement has prevailed during the last few days.

A joint representation to the Shah seems desirable, and I am suggesting this course to Russian Minister.

[30503]

No. 439.

Mr. Marling to Sir C. Hardinge.—(Received September 2.)

My dear Hardinge,

Gulahek, August 14, 1908.

I INCLOSE herewith a document, furnished to me by Lorimer while he was here on dentist leave, respecting the possibility of the Oil Syndicate wishing to extend their operations, and raising various points which would require careful examination in such an event, more especially as regards communications and means of transport. I think if you could communicate a copy to the Syndicate it would greatly help them in appreciating some of the problems with which they may be confronted, and suggest means by which they may be solved. The question is undoubtedly one that merits their most earnest consideration, but as it concerns them practically exclusively I thought it better not to write officially on the subject, but to send it on to you for such action as you think best.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 439.

Vice-Consul Lorimer to Mr. Marling.

(No. 27.)

Sir,

Gulahek, July 28, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith for your information a Memorandum dealing with certain matters which will come up for consideration should the Concessions Syndicate contemplate extending their operations in South-West Persia, more particularly in the direction of Pusht-i-Kuh. That this contingency may shortly arise appears to be the opinion of Mr. Reynolds, the Syndicate's General Manager in Arabistan, as he has privately asked for my opinion on various of the points dealt with in the attached Memorandum.

2. As Mr. Reynolds' present engagement with the Syndicate expires at the end of the current month, it would seem more regular, should it be considered advisable to communicate with the Syndicate on this subject, to do so direct with the Directors. I would therefore suggest that, if judged likely to be of use, a copy of the inclosed Memorandum should be handed to Mr. D'Arcy.

3. I venture to avail myself of the present occasion to draw attention to the fact that if the route favoured in my note is adopted, it will, on the section from Ahwaz to Shush, some 60 miles, coincide with what is generally regarded as the most suitable alignment for the Ahwaz-Khurramabad-Tehran road, the Concession for which is resting unexploited in the hands of the Persian Transport Company.

Should the Concessions Syndicate eventually decide on making use of this route, it might be worth while to ascertain whether the Transport Company would feel disposed to construct this section of the road, which would serve to bring Ahwaz into direct connection with Dizful. This route would be some 40 miles shorter than that via Shushter at present in use.

4. The difficulty which interferes with the employment of the shorter route is the permanent state of insecurity in which it is involved. This condition of affairs would have to be remedied in the interests of the Concessions Syndicate. This fact is an argument of some potency in favour of the Transport Company now undertaking work on this first instalment of their Concession.

It is true that they would probably secure little return on their capital from native traffic, but this is a general feature of all such enterprises in Persia, and for some years they could presumably count on some income from the Syndicate, unless, indeed, the latter are exempted from the payment of road taxes, on which point I am unable to speak from memory.

The Ahwaz trade with Dizful and the districts fed from the latter, Eastern Pusht-i-Kuh and Southern Luristan, would also probably undergo some expansion.

It may also be argued that the fact that the Transport Company had taken what action was possible in regard to the Concession, which has been allowed so long to lie fallow, would strengthen our case in pressing on the Persian Government to take effective steps to alter the state of affairs, which interferes with the enjoyment of the Concession as a whole.

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5. There is said to be a promising "show" of oil at Qilab, 30 or 40 miles north of Dizful, in the Dirakwand country, and should the Syndicate's operations in Pusht-i-Kuh prove remunerative, a favourable conjunction of affairs, or a development in the policy of His Majesty's Government, might make it possible to negotiate for the throwing open of this oil-field and at the same time of the road to Khurramabad.

The greater the aggregation of our interests in this quarter the more possible is it for us to exert pressure on the Persian Government, and the greater the amount of funds available for expenditure in the district the greater the hope of a less hostile, perhaps even of an obsequious, attitude on the part of the local tribes.

This latter argument, however, cannot be regarded as passing beyond the bounds of very dubious conjecture.

6. The establishment of security on the route will entail the provision of policing arrangements, presumably by the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and the cost of these will not be inconsiderable. It therefore seems that every possible advantage ought to be taken of the security resulting therefrom. Reference to the introduction of policing measures will recall to your recollection the policy formerly suggested of subsidizing the Sheikh in return for his protecting the routes of Arabistan, which was strongly urged on its own merits, and as a means of strengthening our relations with the Sheikh, by Sir A. Hardinge in a despatch addressed by him to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, No. 122, dated the 1st July, 1904.

7. The possibilities with which we have just been dealing would also, if realized, work in very directly with the scheme for the institution of a trade route between Ahwaz and Kermanshah, which has recently been brought on the tapis by Captain Haworth, His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah, and which is now under the consideration of Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, Captain, Indian Army,
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for
Arabistan.

Inclosure 2 in No. 439.

Memorandum on certain Considerations relating to the Extension of the Operations of the Oil Syndicate in South-West Persia.

IN view of the possibility of the Concessions Syndicate extending its operations to the oil-fields in Pusht-i-Kuh and in other regions in South-West Persia, it may be considered advisable that the following considerations should be put on record for the information of the Syndicate.

2. The locality at which it would seem most probable that further operations would be initiated is the Deh Luran neighbourhood in the territory of the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh.

Of the possibility of securing an Agreement from the Wali analogous to, and not improbably more favourable than, the existing Agreement with the Bakhtiari, I entertain little doubt.

Accepting this probability, it will be sufficient at present to restrict our attention to more preliminary matters.

The question of the transport of material to the site at once occurs to mind, and is one of some complexity:—

Firstly, there is the question of choice of route;

Secondly, of the protection of that route; and

Thirdly, that of the means of transport which it would be possible and advisable to employ.

3. With regard to the first of these, the choice available appears to be—

(1.) The route via Shushter and Dizful, used by existing traffic.

(2.) An alignment starting from Aminiah (on the right bank of the Karun, opposite Bandar Nasiri) and proceeding up the tract lying between the Diz and Karkha Rivers.

Both these routes would presumably cross the latter river at the spot on the Dizful-Amara route known as Pa-i-Pul, some 14 miles to the west of Dizful town.

Here, according to the season, is a ford or ferry, which is, to the best of my knowledge, favoured by all caravans which have to negotiate the Karkha in this neighbourhood.

Of the tract beyond this point, which would be common to either of the general routes mentioned above, I have no personal knowledge, and my second-hand information regarding it is neither precise nor extensive. From my experience, however, of the country immediately to the north and nearer the main range of hills, which may be assumed to be more difficult, I would not imagine that there should be any very serious obstacles to the construction of a track suitable for wheeled traffic. From the map it would appear that the Dawairij River and its affluents would have to be crossed in their upper courses, and it is not improbable that in the rainy season these might temporarily cause inconvenience.

4. The Karkha is a river of considerable volume, and was difficult to ford on horse-back a few miles higher up in the month of June. Pa-i-Pul is undoubtedly a more favourable crossing place, but in winter it is, I understand, always, or generally, only to be crossed by raft.

The question of the practicability of a bridge of the swinging pontoon type might merit investigation.

5. To return to the initial portion of the route from Ahwaz, that proceeding via Shushter is open to very serious objections. These objections, in my opinion, may be considered as decisive. I cannot imagine that it would be considered practicable to transport the Syndicate's plant across the Gargar and Shatait Rivers, but of this Mr. Reynolds, the Syndicate's General Manager, is in a better position to form a just opinion than I, and when it comes to deciding on the exact trace to be followed numerous minor problems will undoubtedly occur to his mind.

In the case of the Diz River, a similar difficulty presents itself. It is true that this river is spanned by a bridge, but the bridge is only accessible through the narrow streets of the town, and it is quite unequal to bearing such as the C. S. L.'s requirements necessitate.

6. Turning to the alternative route, that passing up between the courses of the Diz and Karkha Rivers, I am again hampered in expressing an opinion by not having actually travelled over it. This route was, however, traversed and reported on by Major Burton, I.A., in the beginning of 1904, but I have not seen his Report.

Owing to the insecurity of this tract of country it is practically closed to all but the Arabs inhabiting it, and it is difficult to obtain information regarding its physical aspects sufficiently definite to be of any value.

It may, however, be considered as certain that the ground throughout is flat alluvial plain, liable to become extremely heavy-going in wet weather; that at some point the Shaur, or the two branches into which it divides, would have to be crossed, and that the marshes into which the surplus water of the Shaur finds its way would have to be avoided or negotiated. The course of the Shaur is, I believe, narrow and trench-like, and bridging it and any of the irrigation canals which might be struck would not present any serious engineering difficulties.

7. From Shush onwards, to my own knowledge, the land is largely cultivated, and the higher waters of the Shaur might again be found to cross the alignment, as well as the Hurmushi Canal, which takes off from the Karkha below Pa-i-Pul.

On this section I am of opinion that it would probably be impossible to avoid having to take up a considerable quantity of cultivated or culturable land in order to obtain a suitable roadway.

8. The question of the possibility of using motor instead of animal transport has been mooted by Mr. Reynolds. Being destitute of all technical knowledge of the requirements of motor vehicles, I do not know what degree of road-building would be necessary to enable them to cross the alluvial plains of Arabistan, with whose characteristics in wet weather those who have served the Syndicate in Arabistan are sufficiently well acquainted.

For metallurgic purposes soft sandstone is available in a ridge which strikes across the Diz River at Kut Bender (about 30 miles in a straight line to the south-east of Dizful). Similar material is available at Aminiah, and presumably at the Al Khadhar hills, which are just visible from Ahwaz.

It is open to fair conjecture that the route after crossing the Karkha might be alignable over firm gravel or conglomerate soil, of which the plains lying on the Laristan-Arabistan border and, to the west, the low hills outside the main Pusht-i-Kuh range appear, so far as my personal observation has extended, to be largely composed.

9. Granted the adoption of the route which I have just been discussing, and the

employment of motor transport or traffic, it would perhaps be worth while considering, in view of the inevitably high initial expenditure on motors and the high rates of freight obtaining on the Karun, whether the head of the road should not be carried back to Mohammerah.

In this way the troubles of transshipment and the delay frequently experienced in the forwarding of heavy material by ship to Ahwaz would be avoided.

10. I have omitted to advert to the question of water supply.

I believe that from Mohammerah to the Karkha at Pa-i-Pul no difficulty would be encountered in obtaining fresh water at any season. Beyond the Karkha, I know that the supply of fresh water on several stages of the route to Amara is deficient or lacking. I cannot specify the exact stages, but it is rather to be feared that the question might arise in the three stages or so which lie between the Karkha and Deh Luran.

11. Passing to the second main question, that of the rendering secure of the route chosen, we are confronted by the real crux of the situation.

As I have already rejected the alternative presented by the Shushter-Dizful route, it is unnecessary to refer to that route in this connection, beyond calling attention to the fact that from Shusht onwards on the south route, and from Dizful onwards on the northern one, the problem of protection is one and the same.

Following up the southern route from its commencement, the section between Mohammerah and Aminiah presents in normal times no serious dangers. It is equally uncontestable, however, that on occasions when the Bani Turuf are up in arms, or the other tribes of the Hawiza tribe are in agitation, the route here would be liable to the incursions of raiding parties from that quarter.

The Sheikh of Mohammerah would certainly insist on the necessity of protective arrangements, which would have to be on a scale involving some expenditure. We could neither deny the necessity nor repudiate our liability for the expense.

This expense would have to be balanced against the presumable saving on freight.

12. The same conditions obtain in a much accentuated form in the case of the Aminiah-Pa-i-Pul section.

Besides passing through the territory of several Arab tribes who have never been habituated to exercise self-restraint when chances of plunder offer themselves.

These tribes, moreover, are inimical to each other, and this circumstance is obviously an additional menace to security. Further, it may be remarked that these resident tribes are administratively divided between the Mohammerah Governorship and the Shushter and Dizful districts, which are ordinarily combined to form the charge of the Governor of Arabistan (so-called "Shushter").

Between Shush and Pa-i-Pul the country has a more mixed population, which includes as a rule, among other disturbing elements, a portion of the unruly and internally-divided Sagwand tribe of Lurs.

Throughout its course this section is liable to the incursion of non-resident Arab predatory tribes, most of whom, having a ready asylum in Turkish territory, are particularly difficult of control. The only person who is capable of making and maintaining the necessary arrangements is the Sheikh of Mohammerah. Of his ability to do so as far as Shush I entertain little doubt, but I questioned his power and willingness unaided to undertake responsibility beyond that point.

The solution of this problem is by no means patent, and cannot be arrived at by any off-hand declaration.

A combination between the Sheikh and the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh is conceivable, and if further strengthened by the good-will and moral support of the Governor or Governors of Arabistan and Luristan, would probably be the most effective instrument for our purposes.

There is, under existing circumstances, no reason, I believe, to call in question the ability of the Wali to extend a sufficient measure of protection to the property and operations of the Syndicate once within his own borders, i.e., to the west of the Karkha River.

13. It is, however, to be remembered that politics and conditions in all this region are very far from stable, and are at all times largely bound up in individual personalities. The death of the Wali would, for instance, probably produce a profound effect, such as would not result in the Bakhtiari country from the demise of half-a-dozen of the Khans.

Though this is the case, the Syndicate should not allow themselves to be

discouraged from entering on work on this side, should business considerations justify it.

With our position in Pusht-i-Kuh consolidated, and the route as far as Dizful and Pa-i-Pul rendered secure, it might eventually become possible to contemplate what could be done towards throwing open the Qilab oil-field to the operations of the Syndicate, but for the meantime this contingency may be considered as remote.

14. The third of the main questions detailed in paragraph 2 above, namely, the nature of transport which it would be possible to employ, has already been dealt with so far as it is in my competence to do so.

Briefly, I surmise that from Aminiah to Pa-i-Pul no obstacle prohibitive to motor traffic would be encountered, but that the construction of a number of culverts or small bridges would probably be necessary, and that in wet weather the clayey nature of the soil, as in other parts of Arabistan, would constitute a drawback in an unmetalled road.

The traversing of the route by the Karkha would probably preclude the establishment of a through motor service from Ahwaz to the site of work; and on the adaptability of the country beyond the Karkha to motor traffic, it is not possible for me at this stage to make a definite pronouncement, though I think that there is little reason for assuming the existence of any prohibitive difficulties.

15. With regard to the possibility of work being undertaken at Kai Kaus, Basht, and Zaitun, I have not seen these localities, and cannot offer any information of a topographical character about them.

The two former would probably present difficulties from the political point of view, as presumably negotiations with the neighbouring Lur tribes (principally Kuhgalu, I believe) would be entailed.

At Zaitun difficulties of this sort should not, I think, arise, but this would depend, to some extent on the exact situation of the borings.

(Signed) D. L. R. LORIMER, Captain, Indian Army,
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for
Arabistan.

Gulabek, July 27, 1908.

[30556]

No. 440.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 2.)

Sir,

India Office, September 1, 1908.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of [your letter, dated the 26th ultimo, inclosing copy of a letter from the Board of Trade, as to the constitution and standing of the firm of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. (Limited), who are desirous of obtaining from the Persian Government a Concession to extract red oxide on the Island of Sirri.

Viscount Morley observes that the amount of capital held in the Company by persons with English names is proportionately small, but that the firm are well reported on, doing business in London and Manchester.

Having regard to the assurances which the Company have given, Lord Morley sees no reason to doubt that His Majesty's Government may safely adopt a neutral attitude towards their application to the Persian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[30568]

No. 441.

Messrs. Strick and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received September 2.)

Baltic House, Leadenhall Street, London,
September 2, 1908.

Dear Mr. Mallet,

I SHOULD be very much obliged if you would kindly let me know whether either or both of the following islands in the Persian Gulf, viz., Jezirat Nabiya Tamb

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(locally called Little Tumb) and Sirri, belong to Persia, or whether either or both of them come within the jurisdiction of the Sheikh of Shargah.

Apologizing for troubling you, and thanking you in anticipation,
I remain, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. STRICK.

[30457]

No. 442.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 341.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1908.

PERSIAN situation.

With reference to Mr. Marling's telegram No. 289 of the 1st instant, and to your telegram No. 155 of the 31st ultimo.

It is evident that the moment has arrived when the communication should be made. Please press the Russian Government to send instructions in this sense to their Representative at Tehran.

An intimation should also be conveyed to the Shah to the effect that the Governments of the two Powers take a very serious view of the situation at Tabreez, and that they will hold his Government responsible if any Russian or British subjects sustain harm. Pressure should also be put on His Majesty to give orders for fresh elections to be held, to reassemble the Medjliss on the 14th November, and to make a public announcement in Tabreez of his decision to maintain the organic laws.

An immediate reply from the Russian Government should be requested.

[30459]

No. 443.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 342.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute.

With reference to your Excellency's telegram No. 156 of the 1st instant.

The view expressed by Mr. Marling and the Russian Minister (as reported in the telegram No. 288 of the 31st ultimo, from Tehran), that the words might be misinterpreted seems to me to be well founded, and I am disposed to think they had better be omitted or altered so as to avoid giving the impression that the British and Russian Governments do not wish their mediation to be invoked further.

[30427]

No. 444.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 236.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1908.

BAKHTIARI road.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 271 and 277 of the 11th and 24th ultimo.

Estimate of 1,000 tomans as payment in full for repairs to Godar Bridge has been refused by the Transport Company.

Their road engineer is returning to Tehran, and they wish to send him, via Ahwaz, to examine the bridge and furnish a report on the probable expense of the repairs. They want to claim from the Khans the additional cost of this journey.

[29849]

No. 445.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 154.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 2, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of a letter which I caused to be addressed to the India Office,* forwarding copy of your despatch No. 168 of the 14th July regarding

* No. 303.

the Concession for motor trains in Persia granted by the late Shah to a group of Persian Notables.

I also transmit copy of a letter received from that Department in reply to my communication calling attention to the existence of two other Concessions of a kindred nature.*

I have to request you to endeavour to ascertain the present position with regard to these two enterprises, and to report to me the result of your inquiries in due course.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[30431]

No. 446.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 155.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 2, 1908.

THE Persian Chargé d'Affaires informed Mr. Mallet on the 28th ultimo that he had received a telegram from his Government to the effect that a Persian Minister was to be appointed to London without delay.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

[30616]

No. 447.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 26th ultimo, relative to the proposal to attach Lieutenant Ranking to the Ahwaz Vice-Consulate.

India Office, September 2, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 447.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 26, 1908.

PLEASE refer to my telegram of the 26th ultimo. Your proposal as to Ranking is approved. Half cost of appointment has been accepted by Treasury.

[30618]

No. 448.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 27th instant, relative to the control of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah.

India Office, September 2, 1908.

* No. 379.

Inclosure in No. 448.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 27, 1908.

PLEASE refer to Marling's telegram No. 244 of the 24th ultimo, as to control of the telegraph line from Borasjun to Mohammerah. He has been informed, in reply, by telegram sent on the 22nd instant, that moiety of cost will be borne by the Treasury, and that, subject to final sanction, Director at Tehran may negotiate with the Persian Minister of Telegraphs.

Director at Tehran has been informed by the Director-in-chief of the Indo-European Telegraph Department that he may expect to receive instructions from Marling on the subject.

[30692]

No. 449.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 290.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 3, 1908.

TABREEZ situation. My immediately preceding telegram.

Reports have been received by the Russian Minister from the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez to the effect that the revolutionaries are greatly discouraged by the expected arrival of reinforcements for the Government troops. The revolutionary party are now showing a conciliatory disposition and are abating their demands. M. de Hariwig does not therefore consider that a joint representation to the Shah is now necessary.

Russian Minister is, in my opinion, optimistic. I have no further news from Tabreez.

[30454]

No. 450.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 237.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 3, 1908.

MY telegram No. 219.

The necessary instructions to negotiate with Persian Minister of Telegraphs respecting the Ahwaz-Borasjun telegraph have been telegraphed by Director-in-chief to Director of Indo-European Telegraph Department at Tehran.

[30355]

No. 451.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 239.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 3, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 153.

You should await further instructions before making communication.

[30568]

No. 452.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 3, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from Mr. F. C. Strick,* inquiring as to the ownership of the islands of Tamb and Sirri, in the Persian Gulf.

Subject to the concurrence of Viscount Morley, Sir E. Grey would propose to reply, with regard to Tamb, that His Majesty's Government informed the Persian

* No. 441.

Government (who had laid claim to the island) in June 1904 that, in view of the fact that the Sheikh of Shargah had hoisted his flag on it before its formal occupation by any other Government, he had the right to fly that flag, as the first occupant, till his lawful possession of the island is disproved, and that this remains the view of His Majesty's Government.

As regards Sirri, he would reply that the claim of the Jowasmi Arab Sheikhs to the ownership of the island, which is vested in the Sheikh of Shargah as their Chief, has never been voluntarily dropped, and that His Majesty's Government, though they have never in any way admitted, nor withdrawn their original objections to, the claim of the Persian Government, have refrained from taking any action in the matter.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive an expression of Lord Morley's opinion on the proposed reply with as little delay as may be convenient.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30821]

No. 453.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 160.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, September 4, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 342: Frontier.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has no objection to omission of phrase "without mediation of Russia and Great Britain," and will telegraph accordingly to Russian Minister at Tehran as soon as he receives a reply from the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople as to his agreement with the wording of the communication.

[30822]

No. 454.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 161.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

St. Petersburg, September 4, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 341.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs telegraphed to Russian Minister at Tehran to make, in conjunction with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, the communication to Shah, and also to add the warning as to the gravity of the situation at Tabreez, and to invite the Shah to make public in that city his decision to maintain organic laws, to proceed to the elections, and to convoke Assembly on the 14th November.

[30799]

No. 455.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 291.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 4, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 192 of the 28th July last, respecting Sirri oxide.

What reply shall I give to the agent of Hadji Ali Akbar, who is anxious to begin negotiations with a view to acquiring the Concession?

[30815]

No. 456

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 292.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 4, 1908.

TABREEZ situation. Your telegram No. 344 to St. Petersburg.

The leading merchants of Tabreez have requested His Majesty's Vice-Consul personally to convey to the Governor-General the minimum of their demands. This, Mr. Stevens did, but his Excellency, in spite of his desire to bring about peaceable solution of situation, refused to grant the merchants' demands unless they accept some of his conditions and guarantees are given that the population will lay down their arms. The Governor-General guaranteed to Mr. Stevens, verbally, the safety of all

[1599]

4 K

those who would go and see him, and even invited Mr. Stevens to accompany them if they wished. The merchants fearing the population, who refuse to allow them to go to the Governor-General will not go, but they are prepared to meet his Excellency on neutral ground, and Mr. Stevens is trying to effect such a meeting between the two parties.

The population have forced the ex-chief of police to leave the Russian Consulate-General, where he was in bast, and have named him Acting Governor.

I have informed Mr. Stevens of my approval of his action.

[30822] No. 457.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 243.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 4, 1908.

PLEASE refer to telegram No. 161 from St. Petersburg.

In view of the above, you are authorized to make a joint communication to His Majesty, acting in concert with M. Hartwig.

The least possible delay should occur in taking such a step.

[30902] No. 458.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey—(Received September 5.)

(No. 293.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 5, 1908.

TAONA murders. Your despatch No. 137 of the 4th ultimo.

His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire reports that he has learnt from the Residency Agent at Lingah that the pirates have finished pearling operations, and have returned home; the moment for action at sea is consequently passed. Residency Agent further reports that the third brother, until recently in prison at Shiraz, having gained his freedom, has also gone home.

Upon receipt of the Lingah Agent's report. His Majesty's Acting Consul-General will make fresh proposals as to course to be adopted.

[30908] No. 459.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey—(Received September 5.)

(No. 294.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 5, 1908.

MY telegram No. 287 of the 31st instant respecting Hormuz oxide.

According to information which I have received, an offer has been made by the Germans, in return for a twelve years grant of the Concession, to advance 300,000*l.* less interest at a per cent. There is no doubt that negotiations are proceeding, though the figure seems very excessive. In view of these negotiations I have officially reminded the Minister for Foreign Affairs that no loan or advance can be raised by the Persian Government unless we have the refusal of it on equal terms, and that I must protest against their making any attempt to pledge the resources of Persia for other purposes so long as they have not paid the interest on our loan.

[30909] No. 460.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey—(Received September 5.)

(No. 295.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 5, 1908.

MY telegram No. 292 of yesterday: Tabreez situation.

M. de Hartwig has received a report from the Russian Consul-General at Tabreez, to the effect that the anti-royalists are being actively encouraged by the Turkish Consul-General. He is giving out that Turkey will follow the example of the Powers in Macedonia and intervene in Persian affairs. M. de Hartwig has suggested to his Government that the mischievous conduct of the Turkish Consul-General should be brought to the notice of the Persian Government by Great Britain and Russia.

[30692]

No. 461.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 348.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 5, 1908.

TABREEZ.

See Mr. Marling's telegram No. 290 of the 3rd instant.

Since no information has been received which indicates that the situation has materially improved, His Majesty's Government are of opinion that it is too early to abandon the idea of a joint representation to the Shah.

You may communicate this to the Russian Government should M. de Hartwig induce them to change their opinion. You should bear in mind that the original suggestion of a communication to the Shah emanated from the Russian Government, and that events at Tabreez were in no way responsible for this suggestion.

[28435]

No. 462.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 244.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 5, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 243 of the 24th July and your despatch No. 193 of the 1st August.

Persian Loan.

His Majesty's Government are prepared, as soon as M. Bizot is in a position to make the necessary application, to adopt the proposal advanced in 1906 whereby Great Britain and Russia were to advance 400,000*l.* to the Persian Government. The grant of this loan must, however, be dependent on the following conditions:—

1. The loan shall not be employed for the suppression of the Constitution, but advanced in such a manner as will allow of its being used as a lever for supporting it. (This might be effected by a stipulation that the loan is for a short period only, before the expiration of which the Assembly must be convoked for the purpose of ratifying or repaying it.)

2. The expenditure of the loan must be controlled by suitable guarantees.

His Majesty's Government would prefer that no such loan was required, and would have to consider carefully, before agreeing to them, the terms decided upon as likely to secure the above-mentioned conditions.

The above is purely for your information and is sent in case the question were suddenly to develop.

[30913]

No. 463.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey—(Received September 6.)

(No. 250.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 6, 1908.

MR. WRATISLAW says that the Persian Government can hardly hope to get the frontier restored to its *status quo*, although their Commissioners are not authorized to consider anything less. It will also save time if they determine beforehand what concessions they are prepared to make to the Turks.

[30910]

No. 464.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey—(Received September 6.)

(No. 296.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 6, 1908.

JOINT Anglo-Russian communication to the Shah on internal situation. Your telegram No. 243 of the 4th instant.

The Russian Minister and I propose to send a Persian translation of the text agreed on in the form of a Memorandum to the Shah, as His Majesty has been ill with fever for the past three or four days. Our Oriental Secretaries will take the

Memorandum to the Shah's camp on Tuesday, and, in the event of the Shah being unable to receive them, they will present it to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose presence at the camp will be arranged for.

To avoid loss of time this arrangement appears to us the best, as the excuse of ill-health might be put forward at the last moment if we asked for an audience.

[30911]

No. 465.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 6.)

(No. 297.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 6, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez. My telegram No. 292 of the 4th instant.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports by telegraph that a meeting between Delegates of the Governor-General and the Nationalist party took place yesterday. Vice-Consul, who went with the Delegates of the Governor-General, took no part in the discussion. A deputation is to wait on the Governor-General for the purpose of discussing the situation. Vice-Consul will accompany it.

I have telegraphed to Mr. Stevens my approval of his action.

(Following is confidential.)

The influence of the Russian Consul-General would seem to be on the wane.

[30923]

No. 466.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 224.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 18, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 209 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to report that Zil-es-Sultan reached Tehran on the 12th instant, and was received in audience by the Shah the same day. I understand that His Imperial Majesty's reception of his uncle was perfectly friendly, and that His Imperial Highness is in excellent spirits.

Zil-es-Sultan sent me a note, of which translation is inclosed, thanking me for the steps taken on his behalf, and left for Resht the following morning.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 466.

The Zil-es-Sultan to Mr. Marling.

(Translation.)

Tehran, August 13, 1908.

I ARRIVED here this morning safely and received your letter, for which I am very grateful indeed. It is quite evident to me that your sense of justice and friendship would not allow the friendship which has existed between the British Government and myself for forty years to be forgotten.

I was received by His Imperial Majesty the Shah to-day in a most gracious manner, and he showed me many expressions of kindness. I explained that the state of my health and the heat of Tehran necessitated my immediate departure, and I received permission to leave to-morrow morning, which I intend to do.

Thanking you again, I take this opportunity of saying good-bye.

(Sealed) ZIL-ES-SULTAN.

[30924]

No. 467.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 225. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 20, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 274 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that in the course of conversation on the 17th instant the Russian Minister asked me if I had seen the report of the interview which Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh had granted to a journalist in Berlin shortly after the *coup d'État*. On my replying in the negative, M. de Hartwig said the language used by the Persian Minister designate to London about the action of the Shah had been so outrageous that he, M. de Hartwig, had represented to His Imperial Majesty the impossibility of being represented at any foreign Court by any one capable of holding language about his Sovereign such as had been used by Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh, and it was in consequence of these representations that the Shah had decided not to allow him to proceed to his post.

Ala-es-Sultaneh, whom I questioned cautiously about this matter to-day, intimated that M. de Hartwig's account was in the main correct.

M. de Hartwig also commented with some vehemence on Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh's character for honesty, and cited in particular, among other charges, that while President of the Assembly he had been drawing salary not only for that post but also as Minister in London and as Persian Delegate on the Mixed Commission at Urumia. I believe this to have been the case, but, with the low standard of public honesty that exists in Persia, I believe there are very few Persians who would see anything iniquitous in an abuse of power of this description. Among the reactionaries who, by Russian support, have now regained the reins of power, there would only be a feeling of mild surprise that he had not also succeeded in getting paid as Minister in Berlin. M. de Hartwig is of course perfectly alive to this, and his solicitude that the Persian Representative in London should be a man of spotless honour probably arises less from an abstract love of honesty than from a desire to seeing the Legation filled by a nonentity who will faithfully reflect the Russian view of the situation, or at least a personage of less liberal views and less well acquainted with the Shah's true character and aims than Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh. I venture to suggest also that it would have been more in accordance with international usage had M. de Hartwig called my attention to the newspaper account in question, so that I might report the incident to you, Sir, before he made representations involving the recall of a foreign Representative whom His Majesty the King had already signified his readiness to accept.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

P.S.—Since writing the foregoing I have obtained a copy of the "Journal des Débats" of the 29th June, giving a translation of the Ehtesham-es-Sultaneh's interview with the correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt." If this translation is accurate it would seem that the strictures of the ex-President of the Assembly were directed rather against the Shah's Russian Advisers, M. Chanchal and Colonel Liakhoff, than against His Imperial Majesty himself, a circumstance to which M. de Hartwig did not allude in speaking to me.

The extract of the "Journal des Débats" is inclosed herewith.*

C. M. M.

[30925]

No. 468.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 226.)

Sir

Gulahek, August 20, 1908.

IN the course of conversation some weeks ago on the subject of the acquisition of a Concession for mining red oxide in the Island of Sirri, Eftekhar-et-Tujjar, Tehran representative of the firm of Haji Ali Akber and Company, stated that the Persian Government derived an annual revenue of 100 tomans from that island. As the matter seemed to me to be of some importance as bearing upon the Persian claim to sovereignty

* Not printed.

over Sirri Island, I requested the Acting Consul-General at Bushire to endeavour to verify the truth of the statement.

Captain Trevor has now furnished me with the following information on the subject:—

More than 150 years ago the Jowasmi Sheikhs appear to have crossed over to the mainland and to have taken possession of Lingah, and down to 1887 members of their ruling families were Sheikhs of Lingah. They gradually came under the domination of Persia, though at first practically independent, and having become Governors, or Deputy Governors, of Lingah, subordinate to the Province of Fars, paid as much revenue to the Governor of Fars as he could extort from them. During this time, however, they continued to collect revenue from Sirri Island, and continued to rule it in their capacity as Jowasmi Sheikhs. An expedition which occasioned a protest on the part of His Majesty's Government was sent to annex Sirri Island to Persia in 1887, subsequent to the deposition by the Persian authorities of the Sheikh from the governorship of Lingah. Since that date the Deputy Governor of Lingah, now a Persian official, has collected the revenue, at first in kind, at the rate previously exacted by the Jowasmi Sheikhs, *i.e.*, half a bag of rice for a small pearl fishing-boat, and one bag for a large boat; latterly this has been converted to a cash payment of about 100 tomans (20*l.*) a-year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30927]

No. 469.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 228.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 20, 1908.

IN the course of conversation with the German Minister on the 17th instant I asked him what truth there was in the rumours that the projected German Bank was to commence operations here in the late autumn. Count Quadt said that the rumours were founded on statements made in the German press, and particularly in the "Berliner Tageblatt," which had been so circumstantial that he had thought it worth while to telegraph to Berlin to inquire what truth there was in them. He had been informed that they were quite unfounded. He went on to lament that the bank would not have the advantages of Mr. Rabino's services, as his long experience and great knowledge of Persia and Persians must be of the greatest value. However, the promoters of the bank had not thought it necessary to secure them, and he (Count Quadt) thought that they were making a great mistake if they imagined that a business of the kind could be successfully started by some "sharp young Jew."

Mr. Rabino himself has informed Mr. Hawkins that he will not join the German Bank as Manager.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30928]

No. 470.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 229. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 20, 1908.

I HAVE read with considerable interest the extract from the Russian "Official Messenger" of the 26th June last inclosed in Mr. O'Beirne's despatch No. 290 of the same date, in which is given what may be presumed to be the Russian Minister's account of the events which led up to the *coup d'état* of the 23rd June and of the *coup d'état* itself.

It would be an unprofitable, if easy, matter to indicate a dozen points in which this statement is misleading, or where material facts have been suppressed, but I would venture to call your attention to statements of facts on which, as they concern myself, I can speak with absolute certainty. In the third and fourth paragraphs of the extract it is said that the leaders—among them many members of the Medjliss—of the Moderate party decided to have recourse to the intervention of the Russian Minister

as was done in December; and that, when these persons addressed their demands to the Russian Minister, the latter, in agreement with the British Representative, assented to their demands and obtained an audience of the Shah, at which he transmitted to His Majesty the desire of the Moderates.

This is incorrect. M. de Hartwig never informed me that he had been approached by anybody representative of moderate opinion and comprising "many members of the Medjliss" with a request for his intervention, nor did he consult me previous to his consequent audience with the Shah, though he apprised me of it subsequently.

On only one recent occasion has he given me any previous knowledge of his intention to speak to the Shah on the internal situation, and on that occasion he particularly informed me that to do so he proposed to take advantage of a formal audience which he had asked for in order to present an Imperial letter announcing a marriage in the Russian Imperial family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30929]

No. 471.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 230.)

Sir,

Gulahak, August 20, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 108 of the 9th June, I have the honour to report that I have informed Messrs. Stevens, of Tabreez, through the British Vice-Consul, that His Majesty's Government consider that their participation in Imam Kuli Mirza's Concession for the navigation of Lake Urmia would be contrary to the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention of the 31st August last. I hope that in doing so I have correctly interpreted your wishes.

I have no doubt that this intimation will suffice to prevent Messrs. Stevens from accepting the Prince's invitation.

I would venture, however, to offer some observations on the Memorandum furnished to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in St. Petersburg, and forwarded by him in despatch No. 264, of the 8th June last, in which are stated the reasons for which the Russian Government consider it preferable that Messrs. Stevens should not take part in this enterprise.

The argument employed is simply that such participation by Messrs. Stevens would not be in consonance with a rigorous application of the Anglo-Russian Convention. The Article of the Convention to which M. Isvolsky appeals is of course Article 1, by which His Majesty's Government bind themselves not to seek, directly or indirectly, for Concessions in the Russian zone, nor to oppose Russian demands for Concessions in the same region. In the case under discussion, however, neither of these conditions is present. The Concession already exists and the holder, conscious of his own inability to exploit it to the best advantage, has invited a British firm to become partners in it, so that it was I conceive open to that firm to accept the offer without any reference to His Majesty's Legation which might perfectly well have remained in ignorance of the transaction till long after its completion. In point of fact, though I was aware that Messrs. Stevens had executed commissions for Imam Kuli Mirza in connection with the Concession, I had no knowledge whatever that there was any question of their direct participation in it until Mr. Vice-Consul Stevens wrote privately to a member of the Legation to inquire whether there was any objection to it. There has therefore never been any question of His Majesty's Government seeking directly or indirectly to obtain a Concession for themselves or for a British subject.

Nor do I think that it can reasonably be suggested that had Messrs. Stevens, either with or without consulting the Legation, accepted Prince Imam Kuli's invitation, we should have been opposing a Russian demand for a concession. For inasmuch as the concession already existed, and by Article 3 "*toutes les concessions existant actuellement sont maintenues*," Russia could not make a demand for it except by previously obtaining the arbitrary cancellation of the existing Concession, which by the Article above quoted, she is implicitly debarred from doing.

I am well aware that, as Mr. O'Beirne mentions in the second paragraph of his despatch, the Russian Government is particularly anxious to obtain a monopoly of the lake navigation; M. de Hartwig has even hinted, in his customary vague way, that there are negotiations on foot for acquiring the Concession from the present holder. Independent information, however, leads me to believe that these alleged "negotiations" are

in fact attempts to induce the Persian Government to transfer the Concession to the same Russian Company which acquired the Ardebil Road Concession from Malek-et-Tujjar in spite of the explicit proviso that the Concession should not be transferred to a foreigner. It is in any case certain that Imam Kuli Mirza has the strongest objections to giving any share in his Concession to Russians, and has already refused to do so. The opposition to Russian aims comes, not from ourselves, but from the holder of the Concession.

It would appear, therefore, that should Messrs. Stevens accept the Prince's invitation, there would, under the "rigorous application" of the Convention desired by M. Isvolsky, be no violation of its provisions. It appears to me rather that, in requesting that we should restrain Messrs. Stevens from assisting Imam Kuli Mirza to exploit his Concession, the Russian Government are straining the Convention to its utmost limits, and that, should any similar case arise in which we are interested, we should be justified in demanding equal consideration from Russia. Possibly, such an occasion may arise when the terms of the projected joint Railway Concession from Julfa to Mohammerah come to be discussed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[30963]

No. 472.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 527.)

Sir,

Therapia, August 31, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 246 of this day's date, I have the honour to forward to you herewith paraphrases of the three telegrams which reached me yesterday from His Majesty's Consul-General at Urumia as to the progress of affairs on the Turco-Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 472.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 51.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Urumia, August 24, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

With reference to my telegram No. 50, the frontier claimed for the Bagdad Vilayet has now been set forth by Taher Pasha. So far as it goes, it coincides with the alleged ancient Turkish frontier as set forth in the map inclosed in Sir C. Spring-Rice's despatch No. 284 of the 9th November, 1906, to the Secretary of State, and includes the Karun from Mohammerah to Katelabid. The Zohab frontier is identical with the line claimed in Appendix of the 21st October to the Foreign Office Memorandum of September 1907, No. 9033. Taher's frontier is all copied out of the Turkish Staff map supplied him from the capital.

Taher declares, in a subsequent note, that he does not recognize either the identic zone or the *status quo*. He further says that the necessary instructions must be issued to prevent any transgression of this frontier.

By the order of the Mutessarif of Hakkyari the Kaïmakam of Gavar has been collecting tithes for the past week in Anzel.

(Sent by post to Tabreez.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 472.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 52.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Urumia, August 26, 1908.

THE Commission will stay near the frontier for two or three weeks, in case Taher should receive fresh instructions. The Russian Vice-Consul and I have both urged him to stay on without result, but Taher replies that it is useless to remain, since Persian Commissioner will not listen to any arguments he may put forward.

The Commission will leave Urumia in a day or two.

I fear the renewal of Kurdish activity if Yaver Pasha is not held personally responsible for the maintenance of order.

(Sent by post to Tabreez.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 472.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 53.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Urumia, August 27, 1908.

THE Minister of the Interior instructed Taher Pasha by telegram last night to rejoin his post at Bitlis, and informed him that Daniel Pasha was appointed to succeed him on the Commission. Daniel Pasha, however, first expressed a wish to go to a Turkish telegraph office to obtain instructions from Constantinople. Turkish Commission left Urumia to-day.

In order to avoid another deadlock if local negotiations are renewed, it is to be hoped that the two interested Governments will lay down principles beforehand for their mutual guidance.

(Sent to Tabreez by messenger.)

[31181]

No. 473.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 7.)

Sir,

India Office, September 5, 1908.

WITH reference to paragraph 1 of Sir A. Godley's letter of the 11th February last, as to a communication to Parliament with regard to the advance of 300,000L which was made to the Persian Government by the Government of India, in two instalments, in the years 1903 and 1904, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to inquire whether any decision has yet been arrived at upon the proposal made by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury for the issue of an explanatory statement with regard to this matter, and, if such a statement is to be issued, at what date the issue will take place.

I am to explain that the preparation of the revised Estimate of the Government of India for the current financial year is shortly to be undertaken, and that in ordinary course the home portion of this Estimate will be dispatched to India in January next and made public in the month of March 1909. The decision on the points above mentioned will affect to some extent the form of the accounts, and it would be convenient for this Department to learn whether it may safely be assumed that the circumstances relating to the Persian advance will have been made public before the Estimates leave this Department in January next.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[31225]

No. 474.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 163.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 7, 1908.

M. TCHARYKOFF to-day expressed to me the hope that the British and Russian Governments would be able speedily to arrive at an arrangement with regard to the exchange of telegraph lines in Persia, as it was desirable, in the opinion of the Russian Minister, that the exchange should be effected before the approach of winter.

As regards what steps had been taken at Tehran to obtain the Persian Government's consent to the principle of the exchange, M. Tcharykoff informed me that he had no information.

[31177]

No. 475

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 251.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 7, 1908.

PLEASE refer to Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 160 on question of Persian frontier delimitation. Provided the words "without the mediation of Russia and Great Britain" are omitted, remaining terms of the communication meet with my approval and with that of the Russian Ambassador.

[31171]

No. 476.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 298.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 7, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez. My telegram No. 297 of yesterday's date.

I have received telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul to the effect that, while he was trying to arrange a meeting between the two parties, the Nationalists abstained from all hostilities with the Government horsemen. On the evening of the 5th instant, however, a large caravanserai was entered by the Government horsemen, who looted the shops of merchants in the Royalist quarter. Revolutionary party is indignant in consequence, and yesterday afternoon fighting was resumed. Both sides are firing guns.

[31224]

No. 477.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 299.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 7, 1908.

THE proposals of His Majesty's Vice-Consul in regard to the Bakhtiari road were based on the terms of the letter from the Persian Road and Transport Company of the 13th March last, inclosed in your despatch No. 43. In accordance with the desire of the Company, these proposals were communicated to the Khans. The present proposals of the Company are essentially different from those put forward previously. They amount to the Company being given *carte blanche*, and this the Khans will not do, as reported in my telegram No. 271. Proposals, moreover, take no account of rough estimate of 180*l.* given by the Ahwaz Agency. The Khans would justly regard these fresh and indefinite demands on the part of the Company as a breach of faith, as they have shown an unusual and praiseworthy readiness to fall in with the Company's requirements previously expressed.

The Company should understand that, if they insist on their new demands, it will be morally impossible for His Majesty's Government to support them, as I entirely agree with Vice-Consul in thinking that it would be most prejudicial to our influence and general relations with the Khans to do so. The Company are of course at liberty to make whatever arrangements they like independently.

[31177]

No. 478.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 353.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 7, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I should be glad to know, with reference to Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 251, whether the point raised in his telegram No. 242 and my telegram No. 333 has been considered by the Russian Government.

We will instruct Mr. Marling to join in making the communication at once if they still wish it to be made.

[30908]

No. 479.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 246.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 7, 1908.

IN view of circumstances reported in your telegram No. 294 respecting the German offer of a loan in return for grant of a Concession for Hormuz red oxide for twelve years, do you think it would be well to ask for the support of the Russian Government?

30910]

No. 480.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 247.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 7, 1908.

I APPROVE the course proposed in your telegram No. 296 respecting joint communication on internal situation.

[30911]

No. 481.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 248.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 7, 1908.

I HAVE received your telegram No. 297 respecting the situation at Tabreez.

Owing to geographical position of Tabreez, matter must be discussed with Russians in event of guarantee being required, and Vice-Consul should accordingly be careful not to accept any responsibility for terms.

Vice-Consul is presumably acting with knowledge of Russian Consul.

[29081]

No. 482.

Foreign Office to War Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 7, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo, stating that the Army Council are of opinion, from the point of view of Imperial military interests, that the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed should be maintained, since the presence of a British officer there in that capacity is so useful as to counterbalance the objection to that of a Russian officer in Seistan.

I am to inform you, in reply, that Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn the grounds on which this opinion is based.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLEP.

[31341]

No. 483.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 164.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 8, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Your telegram No. 353 of the 7th September.

I had, I am afraid, omitted to bring to the notice of the Russian Government the point mentioned in your telegram No. 333 of the 31st ultimo.

I have, however, now done so, and I am informed by M. Tcharykoff that he has no objection to the holding over of the presentation of the identic note until the withdrawal of the troops has actually commenced.

[31346]

No. 484.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 253 A.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 8, 1908.

FOLLOWING repeated to Tehran:—

With reference to your telegram No. 208 of the 7th instant regarding the situation at Tabreez, provided the Russian Government do not wish the contrary, it would now perhaps be an opportune time for Mr. Wratislaw to return to Tabreez, as by the withdrawal of their troops the Ottoman Government have shown evidence of their desire to settle the question of the frontier.

[31315]

No. 485.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 300.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 8, 1908.

SITUATION in Tabreez. Your telegram No. 248 of yesterday's date.

I feel convinced that Mr. Stevens understands what his attitude should be, but I have sent him a warning in the sense of your telegram. I give all the news I have from Tabreez to M. de Hartwig.

[31313]

No. 486.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 301.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 8, 1908.

HORMUZ oxide. Your telegram No. 246 of yesterday's date.

I already have very cordial support of M. de Hartwig in this matter.

[31332]

No. 487.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 302.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 8, 1908.

JOINT communication to the Shah on the internal situation. My telegram No. 296 of the 6th instant.

The Shah was too ill to receive the dragomans this morning. Identie communication was therefore handed to Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Shah's camp for submission to His Majesty.

[30132]

No. 488.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 281. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 8, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copies of correspondence which has passed between His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran and myself on the question of establishing a British school at Tehran,* from which you will observe that Mr. Marling expresses an opinion strongly favourable to the scheme.

I am also disposed to consider that such an institution would be likely to further British interests in Persia to an important extent, and it appears to me that, in view of the fact that French and German schools already exist at Tehran, the Persian Government would have no valid ground for objecting to the opening of a similar establishment under British auspices.

It is possible, however, that the Russian Government might oppose the project, on

* See Part XIV, No. 294; and *ante*, No. 411.

the ground that the opening of a British school at Tehran might be interpreted as a political concession granted to Great Britain in that portion of Persia reserved to Russian enterprise by the Anglo-Russian Convention, and therefore as constituting a violation of that Agreement.

I should be glad to receive your Excellency's opinion as to whether the Russian Government would be likely to adopt this line of argument.

It is clear that no step can in any case be taken in this matter until after the convocation of a new Persian Assembly.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[33012]

No. 489.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 282.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 8, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,* reporting the circumstances in which a considerable number of Persians sought refuge in the village of Gulahek after the *coup d'état* of the 23rd June last and the steps taken, with eventual success, to induce them to depart.

I have to request your Excellency, should you think such a course advisable, to make clear to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs the attitude taken up by Mr. Marling with regard to this incident which, as I am led to fear from a perusal of his despatch, may have been misrepresented to his Excellency by the Russian Representative at Tehran.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[32120]

No. 490.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 158.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 8, 1908.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 208 of the 12th ultimo, reporting an attempt made by the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran, at the instigation of the Military Attaché to his Embassy, to convoke a meeting of the Diplomatic Body to discuss the measures to be taken in view of the disturbed condition of Persia.

I approve the language held by you to Djemil Bey when he subsequently raised this question in conversation.

Should, however, the contingency arise of the Representative of a Mussulman Power acting as doyen of the Diplomatic Body in a Mussulman country, His Majesty's Government could not acquiesce in disputing the expediency of the arrangement, as contemplated by the Russian Minister.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[31393]

No. 491.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 9.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 30th July, relative to the Governorship of Seistan.

India Office, September 7, 1908.

[1599]

* No. 402.

4 N

Inclosure 1 in No. 491.

Consul Kennion to the Government of India.

July 13, 1908.

(Telegraphic.) P.

THE following telegrams are repeated for information, from Consul, Seistan, to Minister, Tehran:—

"No. 40, 20th April, 1908. On pretext of matter referred to in my diary of the 18th February, and on accusation of intrigues in matter of arms traffic, Karguzar, Seistan, seems to be making great efforts to oust Shaukat from governorship.

"It is rumoured here that he has been dismissed and an outsider appointed in his place. The real cause of Karguzar's enmity for Shaukat is that latter has declined to be led by him. Perhaps the Persian Government would view action of Seistan Karguzar in its proper light, if they were apprised that he is trying to usurp their privileges in matter of bribes.

"I suggest that, should necessity arise, the absolute freedom of Kain from disturbances of all sorts and comparative quiet on the Afghan frontier, should be used as an argument against change."

From Minister to Consul, Seistan:—

"No. 27, 24th April. Your telegram No. 40. Minister of the Interior promises not to allow Hashmat-ul-Mulk to go to Kain and to maintain Shaukat in his present post."

Inclosure 2 in No. 491.

Consul Kennion to the Government of India.

July 14, 1908.

(Telegraphic.) P.

FOLLOWING sent to Legation and repeated to Meshed:—

"The Shaukat's agent at Tehran has informed him that Hashmat-ul-Mulk has offered to accept the will of the late Shaukat (see my diary for the 11th June, 1907) if Shaukat resigns Governorship of Seistan. Shah has already been offered a bribe of 30,000 tomans by Hashmat through Amir Bahadur, but agent says that bribe from Shaukat of 15,000 tomans will be sufficient to secure the Governorship for him. The Shaukat says that he does not desire the Governorship at this price, but he fears that if Hashmat gets it he will be deprived of his lands under disputed will too. Above facts have been communicated to me through Mustafa, and my advice is asked.

"In view of correspondence ending with your telegram No. 27, dated the 24th April last, I am telling Shaukat that I am reporting facts to you, and that he can rely on your assistance. In the meantime my advice is to pay no bribes. I trust that you will approve this.

"I would again urge considerations put forward in my telegram No. 126, dated the 30th September, 1907."

[31418]

No. 492.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 9.)

India Office, September 7, 1908.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 3rd instant, inclosing copy of a letter from Mr. F. C. Strick as to the ownership of the Islands of "Jezirat Nabiya Tamb" (locally called "Little Tamb") and Sirri in the Persian Gulf.

The first of these islands is understood to be a small uninhabited island,* 8 miles west of the Island of Tamb proper, and it was visited with the larger island in 1904 by

* See p. 1909 of geographical volume of "Captain Lorimer's Persian Gulf Gazetteer," of which a proof has been supplied to the Foreign Office.

the Bushire Director of Customs, when the hoisting of the Persian flag took place,* which was afterwards the subject of protest by His Majesty's Government. The status of the island is presumably the same as that of Tamb itself, and Viscount Morley concurs in the terms of the reply which it is proposed to make to Mr. Strick regarding it.

He also concurs in the terms of the reply regarding Sirri.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[31388]

No. 493.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received September 9.)

Treasury Chambers, September 8, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Mr. Mallet's letter of the 26th ultimo and its inclosures, further respecting the necessity of increasing the guard at His Majesty's Consulate, Bunder Abbas.

In reply, I am to say that, in the circumstances represented by Secretary Sir E. Grey, my Lords assent to the employment of sixteen infantry, as proposed, as a temporary measure for three years; and they sanction the charge to Imperial funds of one-half of the cost involved, viz., 204*l.* initial and 360*l.* per annum recurrent. They must ask for a further report before three years have elapsed, should the additional guards be still considered to be necessary.

I am at the same time to suggest that it might be found possible to withdraw the existing detachment of cavalry as soon as the infantry detachment is in attendance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. BLAIN.

[31451]

No. 494.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 303.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 9, 1908.

PUSHT-I-KUH route. Your telegram No. 249 of yesterday's date.

The object of Captain Haworth's stay at Hamadan, which is within his district, is to investigate trade conditions at that place, and whither, owing to the impending establishment of a branch of the Russian Bank at Kermanshah, the Imperial Bank of Persia propose to transfer their branch from the latter place. Russian Government cannot, in my opinion, take exception to this, nor still less to Captain Haworth's proposed stay at Khorremabad, where his object is to examine the possibility of exploiting the Persian Road and Transport Company's existing Concession. The information which Captain Haworth will collect should, moreover, be of value in discussing the projected railway.

Captain Haworth must already have reached Hamadan, and I should be glad to know what instructions I am to send him.

I may add that a Russian staff officer, Feodoroff, not attached to the Consulate, has been touring in July within our sphere, from Seistan towards the Afghan border.

[30908]

No. 495.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 254.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 9, 1908.

HAVE you any reason for thinking that the Moins has been squared by the Germans with regard to the Oxide Concession on Hormuz? Taking into consideration the facts reported in your telegram No. 294, it seems odd that he should not have appealed to us.

* See letter of Residency Agent at Lingah to Lieutenant-Colonel Kemball, dated April 4, 1904 (Foreign Office "Persia and Arabia" Print, June 9, Section 1).

[29914]

No. 496.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 164.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1908.

MR. WALTER FLINN, a partner in the firm of Messrs. Ph. Ziegler and Co., of Manchester, called at this Office on the 28th ultimo and presented a letter of introduction from the Chamber of Commerce of that town, as well as a letter from the firm themselves, setting forth the steps which they have taken to defend their interests at Tabreez in view of the disturbances now in progress there, and requesting that you may receive telegraphic instructions to obtain protection for those interests and to put forward a claim against the Persian Government on behalf of the firm on account of all losses which they may incur through the inability of the Persian authorities to maintain order in the town.

In leaving these letters, copies of which are inclosed,* Mr. Flinn stated that the Russian Government had already put forward such a general claim on behalf of the Russian subjects interested.

I observe from the reply returned by you to the application already made to you by the firm's Tabreez branch, as set forth in their letter, that you are aware of the rule by which His Majesty's Government are usually guided in such cases, which is that a Government cannot be held responsible for losses caused by insurgents whose acts they are unable to control.

This rule, however, is subject to the following exceptions:—

(a.) Where compensation for such losses is paid by a Government to its own nationals or to the subjects or citizens of another State; and

(b.) Where the negligence of the servants of a Government was the direct cause of the loss, i.e., when they might have controlled the outbreak but failed to do so.

If, therefore, Mr. Flinn is correct in stating that the Russian Government have put forward a claim such as he describes, and this claim has been admitted by the Persian Government, or if the circumstances connected with the outbreak at Tabreez are such as to bring it within the category contemplated by the above-quoted second exception to the rule, it appears to me that His Majesty's Government are justified in preferring on behalf of British subjects a claim similar to that of the Russian Government on behalf of their own.

I have accordingly to request you to ascertain and report to me by telegraph how this matter stands, and to furnish me with any observations which you may have to offer with regard to the application to the case of the rule and its exceptions.

A copy of the reply which I have caused to be returned to Messrs. Ziegler is also inclosed.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30556]

No. 497.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 19th ultimo and the 1st instant, from which it appears that Viscount Morley is satisfied with the guarantee offered by Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. (Limited), of Manchester, and with the report obtained respecting the constitution and standing of that Company, and that he considers that His Majesty's Government may safely adopt a neutral attitude towards their application to the Persian Government for a Concession to extract red oxide on the Island of Sirri.

I am to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran on this subject,‡ pointing out that, if the Concession is obtained by the Company's agent and transferred to them, His Majesty's Government would, by upholding their rights, admit Persian sovereignty over the island. He therefore suggests that, before encouraging the agent to apply for the Concession, he

* Nos. 380 and 381.

† No. 498.

‡ No. 182.

should inform the Persian Government officially that His Majesty's Government have no objection to the grant of such a Concession to any applicant approved by them and that, pending a decision as to the ownership of the island, the concessionnaire should pay half the royalties due on the oxide extracted to the Sheikh of Sharga.

It appears to Sir E. Grey that the course proposed by Mr. Marling presents this disadvantage, that it would be likely to lead the Persian Government to refuse to grant the Concession to the Manchester Company, and that such a refusal might be followed by its bestowal on a foreigner.

The alternative policy of withholding the suggested declaration concerning the payment of royalties till the Concession is actually granted to Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and then presenting it, is also open to objection, since it might cause the Persian Government to revoke the privilege.

I am accordingly to inquire whether, in Lord Morley's opinion, it would be advisable to instruct Mr. Marling in addressing the Persian Government on this subject to make any mention at all of the question of royalties.

I am further to transmit decypher of a later telegram from Mr. Marling,* reporting that the agent of the Company is anxious to open negotiations for the acquisition of the Concession, and inquiring what reply should be returned to him, and I am to state that, in view of the terms of this message, Sir E. Grey would be glad to receive an expression of Lord Morley's views with as little delay as may be convenient.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29914]

No. 498.

Foreign Office to Messrs. Ziegler and Co.

Gentlemen,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, left at this Office the next day by Mr. Walter Flinn, setting forth the steps which you have taken to defend your interests at Tabreez, in view of the disturbances now in progress there, and requesting that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran may be furnished with telegraphic instructions to obtain protection for those interests, and to put forward a claim against the Persian Government on your behalf on account of all losses which you may incur through the inability of the Persian authorities to maintain order in the town.

I am to inform you, in reply, that a copy of your letter will be forwarded to Mr. Marling, with instructions to ascertain and report to Sir E. Grey by telegraph whether such a claim has been presented by the Russian Government on behalf of their subjects who have incurred similar losses at Tabreez, as stated in conversation by Mr. Flinn, and whether this claim has been admitted by the Persian Government.

Mr. Marling will also be requested to furnish his observations with regard to the circumstances of the case, so that Sir E. Grey may be placed in a position to judge whether they are such as to admit of its being made the object of a claim for compensation, having regard to the rules of International Law which apply to such matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[29914]

No. 499.

Foreign Office to Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, introducing Mr. Walter Flinn, a partner in the firm of Messrs. Ph. Ziegler and Co., which was left at this Office by that gentleman the next day, along with a letter from that firm regarding their interests at Tabreez.

* No. 455.

[1599]

4 O

I am to transmit to you herewith, in reply, copy of a letter which Sir E. Grey has caused to be addressed to Messrs. Ziegler,* in answer to their communication, setting forth the steps which it will be possible to take on their behalf.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[31388]

No. 500.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 256.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 10, 1908.

BUNDER ABBAS Consular guard. My telegram No. 206.

Treasury assent to scheme for increase proposed by Government of India, and will bear half cost for three years.

They suggest withdrawal of existing detachment of cavalry as soon as infantry detachment is in attendance. What is your opinion?

[31584]

No. 501.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 11.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 6th August, relative to affairs at Nedjef.

India Office, September 10, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 501.

Consul-General Ramsay to Government of India.

Sir,

Bagdad, July 1, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Vice-Consul at Karbala has sent me a copy of an address given to a number of students at Nedjef by Mullah Muhammad Kadhém, Khorassani. Photographic copies of the address are said to have been sent for publication in Persia. I give below a very free translation of the address:—

(Note.—A Mahomedan when he is going to say his prayers has to consider whether his clothes are clean, unclean, or doubtful, according to the technicalities of the Mahomedan religion.)

"Some people think it wrong to pray in clothes which are doubtful, but I am not one of those, yet for forty years I have not used European cloth. The Customs returns published by Persia show the great value of the things that she imports, and this entails a continual drain of money from the country. A friend told me that when Shah Muzaffar-ud-Din was going to Tehran to be crowned, he remarked that even the winding sheets of the Faithful were made in Europe, and he expressed an intention to change all this. This intention, like many of his promises, was not translated into action. Without money, government and the protection of the people are not possible. We should be content to use what can be procured in the country, so that our money may not go to strangers. We should not mind if we get coarser cloth and have to pay more for it.

"Mahomedan countries are not prosperous because they are not industrial countries. Agha Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim has brought me some samples of locally- (? in Persia) made cloth, which is quite good enough to serve its purpose. It is not suitable for a man to consider his clothes as of importance. This address should be widely published. Industrial activity is the only cure for the poverty of Persia. We must not expect too much at first, but if we show courage and perseverance we shall eventually succeed."

* No. 498.

2. At the same time the Vice-Consul sent me copies of telegrams that have passed between the Ulemas of Nedjef and the priests at Tehran and other places. The centre of political activity, as far as Persia is concerned, is clearly at Nedjef. Important papers are signed by Haji Mirza Hussein, son of Mirza Khalil; by Akhund Molla Muhammad Kadhém, Khorassani; and by Sheikh Abdulla Mazendarani. Haji Hussein's name is written first, but he is now very old, and quite blind, and Mulla Muhammad Kadhém is really the most powerful man in Nedjef. If fact, he seems to be nearer to being the *de facto* Shah of Persia than is any one else.

3. There is a rumour that the three men named above are thinking of going to Tehran with a view to crushing all opposition to the Assembly, but nothing definite has yet been decided.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. RAMSAY.

[31346]

No. 502.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 363.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 11, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute (see Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 253 A of the 8th instant and my reply No. 225 of to-day).

You should act in the sense indicated in these telegrams.

[31346]

No. 503.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 225.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 11, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute.

In reply to your telegram No. 253 A of the 8th instant, we can hardly allege the withdrawal of the troops as a reason for instructing Mr. Wratislaw to return to Tabreez, after having acted on your suggestion of waiting until the withdrawal of the troops has actually commenced before making a communication to the Persian Government. But we will propose that as soon as the withdrawal is begun the Consuls should leave.

[31418]

No. 504.

Foreign Office to Messrs. Strick and Co. (Limited).

Gentlemen,

Foreign Office, September 11, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant inquiring as to the ownership of the Islands of Jezirat Nabiya Tamb (locally called "Little Tamb") and Sirri in the Persian Gulf.

The first of these islands is understood to be a small island 8 miles west of the Island of Tamb proper, and the status of the island is, in the view of His Majesty's Government, the same as that of the larger Island of Tamb. In 1904, His Majesty's Government intimated to the Persian Government that the Sheikh of Shargah, who had hoisted his flag on the island, had the right to fly it as the first occupant until his lawful possession was disproved.

As regards Sirri, the claim of the Jowasmi Arab Sheikhs to the ownership of the island, which is vested in the Sheikh of Shargah as their Chief, has never been voluntarily dropped, but His Majesty's Government, though they have never in any way admitted nor withdrawn their original objections to the claim of the Persian Government, have refrained from taking any action in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[31732]

No. 505.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 167.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 12, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Your telegram No. 363 of yesterday. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs agrees with His Majesty's Government in thinking that a commencement of withdrawal of Turkish troops from the disputed zone should precede the departure of the British Consul-General and the Russian Vice-Consul. He pointed out, however, that Russian Vice-Consul is permanently resident at Urumia, and the Russian Government accordingly propose, when the time comes, merely to instruct him to resume his ordinary Consular duties, and to take no further part in the frontier dispute. M. Tcharykoff added that, in his opinion, Mr. Wratislaw might be instructed to leave when Turkish troops have completely evacuated country between Urumia and Tabreez on the north side of the lake. He would be glad to know whether you concur in this suggestion, and would instruct Mr. Marling to concert with his Russian colleague for the simultaneous issue of proposed instructions to the British and Russian Consular Representatives at Urumia. He has telegraphed to M. de Hartwig in above sense.

[31733]

No. 506.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 304.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 12, 1908.

HORMUZ oxide. Your telegram No. 254 of the 9th instant. It is probable that the reason Moin-ut-Tujar did not appeal to us was that he knew that we should in any case oppose any attempt on the part of the Germans to acquire the Concession, and that, as reported in my telegram No. 283 of the 27th August, M. de Hartwig had moved in the matter.

The German application for the Concession was, according to Moin-ut-Tujar, made through a Persian whom he is about to take into his pay.

Though I can see no tangible grounds for supposing that he has been squared by the Germans, it is clear that he wants to keep a free hand, as is shown by his disinclination to conclude contracts with British firms.

[31734]

No. 507.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 305.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 12, 1908.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Tabreez reports that yesterday morning he accompanied Delegates to and from the meeting with the Governor-General. He took no other part in the interview.

In reply to representations of the Delegates the Governor-General refused to recognize the Constitution until it had been reaffirmed by the Shah or to permit the local Assembly to be reopened. He required that the insurgents should submit immediately and lay down their arms. He finally said that the Shah would be willing to establish Law Courts and to make other concessions of the nature of those which had been talked of in January 1906.

The Popular party invited the Russian Consul-General to attend the meeting, but he refused to do so if his colleagues were asked.

An attack was made, while the meeting was in progress, on the north-west quarter of the town by Maku Kurds with artillery. The Kurds, who were completely defeated, lost one gun. The losses on both sides are estimated at about 200. There is no doubt that before ordering the assembly of Parliament the Shah hopes to reduce the town. There is great excitement, and the situation is serious.

The attitude of Russian Consul-General appears to me inexplicable in view of the recent joint recommendations to the Shah.

[31451]

No. 508.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 259.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 303.

In view of your explanation, you need not act on my telegram No. 249.

[31181]

No. 509.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 21st February relative to a proposed statement in Parliament on the subject of the advance of 300,000*l.* made in two instalments to the Persian Government by the Government of India in 1903 and 1904, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the India Office,* inquiring whether any decision has yet been arrived at on the subject.

In view of the considerations set forth in this letter, I am to request that you will move the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to favour Sir E. Grey with a reply to my communication above referred to at as early a date as may be convenient.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30067]

No. 510.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 16th May last, relative to the exchange of the control of the Tehran-Meshed and Khaf-Nasratabad telegraph lines, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, forwarding copy of an *aide-memoire* communicated to his Excellency by the Russian Government on the subject.†

It will be seen from this paper that the Russian Government are unwilling to accept the proposal of His Majesty's Government that each Power should withdraw all its employés from the line controlled by the other, and put forward instead the suggestion, apparently based on technical grounds, that each should withdraw all its mechanics and inspectors, but that Great Britain should retain her signallers at Tehran and Meshed, and Russia hers at Birjand and Nasratabad.

Though Sir E. Grey would have preferred to see the question settled in accordance with the proposal of His Majesty's Government, there appears to him to be little likelihood that the Russian Government could now be induced to withdraw their objections to it, and he is accordingly disposed to agree to the solution of the difficulty on the lines of the compromise now suggested, which approximates to the arrangement preferred by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, Consul-General at Meshed, and Consul in Seistan, and, originally, by the Government of India also.

It is further to be observed that the Russian Government have now appointed a Military Attaché to their Consulate in Seistan, whose presence, in which His Majesty's Government are obliged to acquiesce, is so much more objectionable to them than that of the Russian signallers, as to render the retention of these last a comparatively trivial matter.

I am to request that, should Viscount Morley concur in the view above expressed, he will cause to be prepared and forwarded to this Office a draft Arrangement to give effect to the exchange on the lines now proposed, which would be transmitted to Sir A. Nicolson for discussion with the Russian Government, in accordance with the suggestion contained in the penultimate paragraph of his Excellency's despatch.

With reference to the last paragraph of that despatch, I am to state that Sir E. Grey has addressed a telegram to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, inquiring

* No. 473.

† No. 421.

what progress has been made in obtaining the consent of the Persian Government to the principle of the exchange.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[31225]

No. 511.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of to-day's date, relative to the exchange between His Majesty and the Russian Government of the control of telegraph lines in Persia, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg,* reporting that the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has expressed the hope that a solution of this question will speedily be reached.

I am therefore to request that Viscount Morley will favour Sir E. Grey with a reply to my letter above referred to with as little delay as may be convenient.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30360]

No. 512.

Foreign Office to Mr. Ellinger.

Dear Mr. Ellinger,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 27th ultimo, relative to red oxide at Hormuz, we have received a telegram from Mr. Marling, dated the 1st instant, reporting a conversation which he had had with the Moin-ut-Pujjar that morning on the subject.

In the course of this conversation Mr. Marling pointed out to the Moin how the formation of a British Company would strengthen his hold on his Concession, but in spite of his efforts he was unable to overcome the Moin's hostility to the scheme.

The Moin told Mr. Marling that he was shortly coming to Europe, and would discuss the matter with you, which would appear to show that he is confident of retaining his Concession, but anxious for the support of His Majesty's Government to secure that object.

I tell you this in order that, when the Moin broaches the subject with you, you may lay particular stress on the advantages which he would derive from the formation of a Company, and make every effort to obtain his consent to the scheme.

I should be much obliged if you would let me know, or Sir C. Hardinge, as I shall be absent from the 16th instant, when the Moin arrives.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30503]

No. 513.

Foreign Office to M. W. K. D'Arcy.

Dear M. D'Arcy,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1908.

I SEND you herewith a copy of a private letter to Sir C. Hardinge from Mr. Marling, which incloses a copy of a despatch and Memorandum from Captain Lorimer, our Vice-Consul at Ahwaz,† dealing with certain points which will become important if the Oil Concessions Syndicate contemplate extending the field of their operations in South-Western Persia.

I think these papers will be of use to the Syndicate in deciding how such an enterprise should be carried out, if they decide to undertake it, and I need hardly add that it is most desirable from the point of view of British interests, both political and

* No. 474.

† No. 439 and Inclosures.

commercial, that it should be undertaken by them, since if it is not there is every likelihood that the business will be secured and worked by the subjects of a foreign Power.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[31840]

No. 514.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 231.)
Sir,

Gulahek, August 22, 1908.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the exchange of telegraph lines, I have the honour to quote the following extract, dated the 21st ultimo, from a Seistan Consulate diary received to-day:—

"Dr. Kosminsky told Mr. Howson that 40,000 roubles had been sanctioned for the complete renewal of the Meshed-Seistan line. The work, however, was not being taken in hand pending negotiations that were taking place. He further said that the annual expenditure was 2,000 roubles divided equally between the two sections—Meshed-Sehdeh and Sehdeh-Seistan.

"No arrangements have as yet been made for the annual repairs."

I presume that the 2,000 roubles, mentioned as the annual expenditure, covers only the cost of annual repair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[31796]

No. 515.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 388.)
Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 1, 1908.

I COMMUNICATED yesterday to M. Tcharykoff an *aide-mémoire*, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, setting forth the amendments which you wished to see introduced in the identic communication to be made by the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran to the Persian Government in regard to the conciliatory disposition evidenced by the Sublime Porte in dealing with the frontier dispute.

M. Tcharykoff said that he was quite ready to accept the amendments, although he should have felt himself justified for his part in speaking of "formal assurances" from the Ottoman Government, as the new Turkish Ambassador, who had just arrived, had made very positive declarations in the sense of the communication. He also agreed that it would be well to inform the Ambassadors at Constantinople of the wording, so as to insure it being in strict accordance with the facts, and he would suggest that both Governments should now telegraph the text both to the Embassies at Constantinople and to the Legations at Tehran, informing the latter that they should not deliver the message until they received further instructions. By this procedure little time would be lost. I said that I would inform you at once of his views, which seemed to me most reasonable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 515.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Majesty's Embassy had the honour to receive, on the 13th (26th) instant, the draft of an identic communication which the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs proposed should be addressed to the Persian Government in regard to the projected withdrawal of the Ottoman troops from certain localities which had been occupied by them to the east of the zone on the Turco-Persian frontier.

His Majesty's Embassy has now the honour to inform the Imperial Ministry for

Foreign Affairs that, as His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has made no representations to the Sublime Porte on the subject since the introduction of the new régime into Turkey, His Majesty's Government would prefer that the first paragraph in the above-mentioned identic communication should be omitted, and they would also prefer to substitute in the second paragraph the words "stated to them" for the words "leur a donné les assurances les plus formelles."

The second paragraph, which would then be the opening paragraph of the identic communication, would then run as follows:—

"It is with a sincere satisfaction that the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and of London are in a position to inform the Persian Government that the Ottoman Government have stated to them that the Turkish troops" *et seq.*

No alteration is desired in the third (now the second) paragraph of the draft identic communication.

His Majesty's Embassy would also suggest that it might be desirable that the British and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople should be made acquainted with the proposed wording, so as to insure it being strictly in accordance with what has been said at Constantinople.

St. Petersburg, August 18 (31), 1908.

[31797]

No. 516.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 389.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 1, 1908.

I SPOKE to M. Tcharykoff to-day in regard to the request made by the Turkish Ambassador in Tehran to his Government for the despatch of an escort to Tabreez to protect the Ottoman Consul and Ottoman subjects in that city, and I left with him an *aide-mémoire*, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, giving the substance of Mr. Marling's telegram and the text of the instructions which His Majesty's Government proposed should be sent to the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

M. Tcharykoff said that he had heard nothing from M. de Hartwig on the subject, and he would naturally have to make inquiries at Tehran before giving an opinion as to the instructions with which it was proposed to furnish the Ambassadors. Personally, he had very great doubts if the Sublime Porte would for a moment entertain the proposal of their Ambassador, as they would know that such a step would be most distasteful to the Persian Government, and, from the tenor both of the language held at Constantinople and also by the Turkish Representative here, it was clear that the Ottoman Government wished to establish the friendliest relations with their Mussulman neighbour.

It seemed to him that, as the question had been mooted locally at Tehran, it could be snuffed out locally also, without perhaps moving the heavier machinery of representations or suggestions on the part of the Ambassadors at Constantinople. He wished to refrain as far as possible from pressing the Sublime Porte at this moment on any subject, and at first sight the question of an escort being sent to Tabreez seemed to him so unlikely a project that he hardly thought it worthy of great attention. However, he would await a report from M. de Hartwig, and what he had said was merely the expression of first impressions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 516.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Majesty's Government have received information that the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran has notified the Persian Government of an intention to send an escort to Tabreez for the protection of the Ottoman Consul and Ottoman subjects. The Persian Government, it appears, object strongly to this step on the ground that it would create an unfortunate effect in Tabreez and is uncalled for at the present moment, as the town has been lately comparatively quiet and negotiations between the two conflicting parties

are proceeding. The Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed the hope that His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople might be able to dissuade the Turkish Government from taking the contemplated step.

His Majesty's Government would be glad to have the views of the Russian Government on the subject; and if the Imperial Government are in favour of saying something at Constantinople, His Majesty's Government would propose the following instructions to the Ambassadors:—

"You may inform the Sublime Porte that Persia has appealed to us to dissuade the Ottoman Government from sending an escort to Tabreez on the ground that the step would create an unfortunate effect in Tabreez and is not necessary for protection. Negotiations are, moreover, proceeding. In these circumstances, perhaps, the Sublime Porte would not act on the proposal."

His Majesty's Embassy would be glad to learn the views of the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

St. Petersburg, August 18 (31), 1908.

[31798]

No. 517.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 390.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 1, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 374 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit a copy of the identic communication which the Russian Government propose should be made to the Shah by the British and Russian Representatives at Tehran, impressing on His Majesty the desirability of convoking the Assembly on the date which had been fixed.

M. Tcharykoff explained to me that a few days ago the Shah had informed M. de Hartwig that the new electoral regulations would be shortly promulgated, and perhaps this announcement on the part of the Shah afforded an opportunity of intimating that the two Governments hoped that His Majesty's promises would be fully completed by the convocation of the Assembly. He thought, therefore, that it would be better not to await the arrival of Mr. Barclay, though leaving to M. de Hartwig and Mr. Marling full discretion as to the mode and moment of making the communication.

I told M. Tcharykoff that I would telegraph the text to you, and let him know your opinion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 517.

Draft Identic Note to be transmitted to the Shah by British and Russian Representatives at Tehran.—(Communicated to Sir A. Nicolson by M. Tcharykoff, August 18 (31), 1908.)

(Confidentielle.)

VU que Sa Majesté le Schah a fait connaître son intention de publier sous peu les nouveaux règlements concernant les élections législatives prochaines, le Ministre de Russie [le Chargé d'Affaires de la Grande-Bretagne] estime, conformément aux instructions de son Gouvernement, et sans aucunement vouloir s'immiscer dans les affaires intérieures de la Perse, qu'il serait très désirable et opportun, dans l'intérêt de l'apaisement définitif du pays et dans celui du commerce et de la prospérité générale, que Sa Majesté le Schah daigne, en même temps, déclarer que sa décision de maintenir les lois organiques qu'elle a octroyées à son Empire est irrévocable et que le Médjliss, à l'élection duquel on va procéder, se réunira à Téhéran le 1^{er} (14) Novembre, année courante.

Saint-Petersbourg, le 18 (31) Août, 1908.

[31804]

No. 518.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 396.)

St. Petersburg, September 4, 1908.

Sir,

I COMMUNICATED to M. Tcharykoff the substance of your telegram No. 341 of the 2nd instant, instructing me to request the Russian Government to hasten the presentation of the identic communication to the Shah in regard to his convoking the Assembly on the date fixed, and also proposing that a warning should at the same time be given to His Majesty as to the critical condition of affairs at Tabreez, and the desirability of a public announcement being made in that city as to the Shah's irrevocable decision to maintain the organic laws and to convoke the Assembly on the 14th November.

I have the honour to transmit copy of the reply which I have received from M. Tcharykoff announcing his concurrence with the views of His Majesty's Government and the fact of his having sent the necessary instructions to M. de Hartwig.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

Inclosure in No. 518.

M. Tcharykoff to Sir A. Nicolson.

Mon cher Ambassadeur,

Saint-Petersbourg, le 21 Août (3 Septembre), 1908.

EN réponse à votre lettre d'aujourd'hui je m'empresse de vous informer que, en conformité avec l'avis du Cabinet de Londres, je viens d'inviter par télégraphe M. Hartwig à s'acquitter, d'accord avec Mr. Marling, de la communication convenue au sujet de la convocation du Medjliss. J'ai en même temps prescrit à notre Ministre d'ajouter, de concert avec le Chargé d'Affaires Britannique, à la communication précitée ce qui suit:—

"Les Gouvernements Russe et Anglais envisagent la situation à Tauris comme extrêmement grave et le Gouvernement Persan sera tenu responsable si préjudice était porté à des sujets Russes ou Britanniques. Afin de pacifier la population de ladite ville le Schah est invité à faire publier à Tauris le texte de la Proclamation, par laquelle Sa Majesté fera savoir à son peuple son intention de maintenir les lois organiques, de procéder aux élections et de convoquer le Medjliss pour le 1^{er} (14) Novembre."

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) TCHARYKOFF.

[31808]

No. 519.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 400. Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, September 7, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your despatch No. 266, Confidential, of the 26th ultimo, relative to the abolition of the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas.

I am of opinion that M. Isvolsky would not be indisposed to effect some considerable changes among the various Russian officials employed at Tehran and elsewhere in Persia, but he would expect that some corresponding measures would be taken by His Majesty's Government in regard to British officials. It is no doubt true that we have perfectly sound reasons for desiring the transfer of certain Russian officials, whose activity at their present posts is inconvenient and unfortunate; but the Russian Government imagine that to insure the smooth working of the Convention it would be most desirable that some British officials should also be moved to other spheres. The question is one which will have to be discussed sooner or later, and I should of course be perfectly ready to speak with M. Isvolsky on the subject, but I am sure that it would be to no purpose to select one individual Russian employé for special and solitary treatment. Moreover, I doubt whether it would be wise to ask for the abolition of the Russian Consulate at Bunder Abbas. Such a request might lead to proposals

from the other side that we should abolish a post or two in the Russian sphere; and with this we might be disinclined to agree. I would suggest limiting our proposals to a change of individuals.

As M. Isvolsky is visiting London next month, the question as to a reorganization of the respective staffs might perhaps be opened up with him on that occasion, and the detailed discussions continued here when he returns.

I would wish to take this opportunity of mentioning that I doubt if M. de Hartwig will be transferred as soon as was anticipated. It is considered but just that another post should be found for him, and at present there is no suitable one vacant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[31793]

No. 520.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 550.)

Therapia, September 8, 1908.

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 251 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to forward to you herewith copy of the French version of the communication which it is proposed that the British and Russian Legations at Tehran should present to the Persian Government, expressing the hope that as the Turkish Government have declared their intention of withdrawing their troops from beyond the frontier zone which is now in dispute, they will now be able to settle this dispute with the Turkish Government in a friendly way.

The Russian Ambassador and myself are agreed as to the suitability of this note.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 520.

Draft Anglo-Russian Note to be communicated to Persian Government.

C'EST avec une sincère satisfaction que les Cabinets de Saint-Petersbourg et de Londres se trouvent à même d'informer le Gouvernement Persan que le Gouvernement Ottoman leur a déclaré que les troupes Turques qui avaient pénétré sur le territoire Persan et au delà de la zone reconnue comme devant être déclarée objet d'une délimitation seront rappelées sans retard et que la Porte est résolue à arriver à une solution amicale les difficultés avec la Perse.

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Schah, la Légation de Russie [de Grande-Bretagne] se plaît à espérer que le Gouvernement Persan continuera à user de son côté de la modération nécessaire et pourra, dès lors, aboutir à une solution définitive de son litige-frontière avec le Gouvernement Ottoman.

[32035]

No. 521.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 306.)

Tehran, September 14, 1908.

(Telegraphic.) P.

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 302 of the 8th instant.

The Minister of War invited M. de Hartwig to a review of troops at the Shah's camp on the 12th instant, which his Excellency attended privately and had some conversation with the Shah. His Majesty, according to M. de Hartwig, is much annoyed that news of the joint representation should have become known, as he fears that he would seem to be yielding to compulsion of two Powers if he now follows the advice given; this would also stimulate the revolutionary movement. His Majesty further said that he would make a reply to the communication very shortly, but that he wished, until he had restored his authority at Tabreez, to defer making any announcement.

Following is very confidential:—

I consider that M. de Hartwig's visit to the Shah is very ill-timed, for the reactionary party at Court will assert that Russia was not in earnest in giving advice to the Shah if His Majesty now delays making declaration.

[32036]

No. 522.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 307.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 14, 1908.

EXCHANGE of telegraphs. Your telegram No. 251 of the 8th instant.

The Minister of Telegraphs, whom the Acting Superintendent of the Indo-European Telegraph Department recently sounded, is unwilling to agree. M. de Hartwig, however, is of opinion that it will be possible to get the question settled.

I can see only one objection to our moving at present, viz., that the negotiations for the Ahwaz line, about which the Superintendent is inclined to be hopeful, might be jeopardized and would certainly be delayed.

[31388]

No. 523.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 14, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 26th ultimo, relative to the increase of the guard of His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from the Treasury,* assenting to the scheme proposed by the Government of India and sanctioning the charge to Imperial funds of one half of the expense involved in carrying it into effect.

I am at the same time to request you to draw Viscount Morley's attention to the suggestion contained in the last paragraph of the letter that the existing detachment of cavalry should be withdrawn as soon as the infantry detachment is in attendance.

Sir E. Grey has addressed a telegram to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran inquiring his opinion of this proposal.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[31224]

No. 524.

Foreign Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 14, 1908.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, relative to the proposed repairs to the Godar Bridge on the Ahwaz-Ispahan Road.

In this letter you state that your Company are unwilling to accept the sum named in the estimate proposed by Lieutenant Ranking, and agreed to by the Bakhtiari Khans in full payment of the expense incurred in carrying out these repairs, and you express the opinion that the solution suggested in your letter of the 24th ultimo is the best one to adopt in the interests of the Khans.

I am to inform you in reply that the decision of your Company was communicated by telegraph to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, who has now pointed out that the proposals made by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz on this subject were based on your letter of the 13th March last, and were communicated to the Khans in accordance with the request which it contained.

The proposals now made in your letter of the 24th ultimo appear to be essentially different from those which your Company previously put forward, and to amount to a request that the Khans will give them *carte blanche* in the matter of the expense to be incurred in repairing the bridge. This, as your Company are aware from my letter of the 13th ultimo, their Excellencies have already expressed their unwillingness to do.

* No. 423.

With reference to the statement in your letter under reply that the estimate prepared at Ahwaz, which was communicated to you in my letter of the 26th ultimo, is obviously defective, I am to observe that that estimate was based on information furnished to Lieutenant Ranking by your Company's agents on the spot.

Mr. Marling expresses the opinion that the Khans have shown unusual readiness to fall in with the expressed requirements of your Company, and that they would be certain to regard the fresh and indefinite demands now put forward as a breach of faith.

He considers that to press these demands on the Khans would be most prejudicial to the influence exercised over their Excellencies by His Majesty's Government, and to the relations at present existing between the two.

Sir E. Grey concurs in Mr. Marling's view, and desires me to point out that if these new requirements are insisted on, it will be morally impossible for His Majesty's Government to afford to them the support of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, and Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz.

Your Company are, however, naturally free to make with the Khans such independent arrangements as they may consider to be most in accordance with their interests.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30134]

No. 525.

Foreign Office to Mr. Ellinger.

(Confidential.)

Dear Mr. Ellinger,

Foreign Office, September 14, 1908.

WITH reference to my letter of the 12th instant, relative to the Concession held by the Moin-ut-Tujjar to extract red oxide at Hormuz, I write to tell you that we have recently received a despatch from our Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran on the subject.

In the course of this report Mr. Marling expresses the opinion that the Moin suspects that one reason for the warm interest which His Majesty's Government are displaying in this question is that they are seeking to induce him to place his Hormuz Concession so far under British protection that the Legation will be able to use its position to bring pressure to bear on him in other matters in which there are British interests opposed to his own.

Mr. Marling thinks that if your firm could disabuse the Moin's mind of this suspicion, which is, of course, quite unjustified, the chief difficulty in the way of retaining the trade in British hands would be removed.

We believe, therefore, that if you could take a suitable opportunity to assure the Moin that His Majesty's Government have no such ulterior motive as he suspects, much good might result not only to British trade in general, but to your own interests in particular.

In any communication which you might make to the Moin in this sense you would, of course, carefully avoid giving him the impression that your action was in any way suggested or prompted by the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[30127]

No. 526.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 381. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran,* relative to the efforts which are being made by German subjects to increase trade between that country and Western Persia.

I have to request your Excellency to instruct the British Acting Consul-General at

* No. 406.

Bagdad to furnish any information which he may be able to obtain regarding the position and proceedings of Herr Berk Puttmann, whose transactions are referred to in this despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[30098]

No. 527.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 168.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1908.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin,* summarizing an article which appeared in the "Berliner Tageblatt" of the 28th ultimo from the pen of Herr Mygind, the correspondent of that paper in Persia, in which the means of extending German trade in the western region of that country, chiefly at the expense of British commerce, are discussed.

I have to request you to furnish me with your observations on this despatch, with special reference to the proposal to obtain, on behalf of German subjects, Concessions to exploit the naphtha in the central and northern oil districts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[30923]

No. 528.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1908.

WITH reference to India Office letter of the 17th July, relative to the departure of the Zil-es-Sultan from Persia, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran reporting that His Imperial Highness left that capital for Resht on the 14th ultimo,† so that the question of providing a vessel of the Royal Indian Marine to convey him from Bushire need no longer be considered.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[32177]

No. 529.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Secretary Lord Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 14th instant, regarding the Governorship of Kain.

India Office, September 15, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 529.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

September 14, 1908.

GOVERNORSHIP of Kain. See your telegram dated the 30th April, 1907.

Information has been received by His Majesty's Consul, Seistan, to the effect that Governorship has been secured by Hashmat-ul-Mulk for 59,000 tomans, of which sum part has been paid in cash, and Russian Bank has guaranteed the balance, and that Firman has been issued appointing him, though it is kept secret, and will not be produced pending arrival at Birjand of Hashmat or his son. Consul urges that, even

* No. 422

† No. 466.

if no disturbance takes place, this will be disastrous to our position. It is not clear whether this information has been sent to Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, though Consul, Seistan, has been in telegraphic communication with him. In transmitting it for the information of your Lordship, we can only repeat our objections to Hashmat's being appointed, under obligation to Russia, to the Governorship. His Majesty's Government will, we trust, be able to secure the retention of Shaukat in his post.

[32182]

No. 530.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 16.)

THE Director of Military Operations presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and begs to forward herewith copy of an abbreviated translation of articles on Arabistan by Edward Mygind, in the "Berliner Tageblatt," of the 20th and 26th August, 1908.

War Office, September 15, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 530.

Abbreviated Translation of Articles on Arabistan, by E. Mygind, in the "Berliner Tageblatt" of August 20 and 26, 1908.

I. "The English at Work."

IN spite of their discouraging experiences with the Bakhtiari, the English Lynch Company entered upon negotiations with the Lesser Lurs and the Feili Lurs for the construction of a caravan road in connection with the steamer service on the Karun, northwards by Shuster and Dizful to Khoramabad, and beyond in the direction of Tehran. The Company had counted upon the enmity and jealousy between the Feili and Bakhtiari to act as an inducement to the former to have the main trade route made through their territory.

But, whether they had heard of the unfair treatment meted out to the Bakhtiari by the English, or feared that the road would threaten their independence, no negotiations, promises, nor presents could move the Feili from their hostile attitude towards the English firm.

The latest attempt has just failed. The English Consul in Ahwaz, Captain Lorimer, had gone by Shuster to Dizful a week before my arrival, to try and persuade the Lur Chiefs to change their attitude. It was officially given out here that he only went to spend a few months of his summer leave in the hills, a harmless and plausible reason for his absence, which I would have had no reason to doubt, if a certain incident had not shown me that there was another. When I wanted to book a passage by the steamer to Shuster, the captain informed me that there was no cabin available, although the agent had informed me two days before that he had made arrangements for me. The captain, moreover, showed me discourtesy, which was quite unprovoked and uncalled for.

The agent, whom I at once proceeded to look for, was, strange to say, not to be found. I therefore decided to make use of the Persian steamer. It turned out, however, that, owing to its engine having been damaged, the steamer had not arrived.

This affair with the English appeared to me so peculiar that I suspected some special motive, and set myself the very same evening to discover it. It so happened that I met a certain person who put me on the track, and by next morning I had ascertained the following: the agent, who acted as a kind of factotum to the Consulate, had heard from the Consul a few days previously that his mission had again been fruitless, that the Chiefs had threatened him with death if he continued his journey, and reproached him with having come only to get them into trouble with the Government, and to arouse the suspicion, both in Tehran and among the Bakhtiari, that they (the Chiefs) had invited him. They would have nothing to say to him or his road, which could only benefit the English. On receipt of this letter, the agent had thought it necessary to inform the Consul of my arrival, and my intentions to go to Dizful; whereupon pressing instructions came back by wire if possible to stop, or, at any rate, to delay my journey. Very natural, too! There was no need for all the world to learn of the English failure.

This discovery was doubly welcome to me, for it rendered my intended journey to Dizful unnecessary, there being now no object for it. Under such circumstances, also, there was no hope of getting through to the north.

From all that has been said, it is sufficiently proved that the English Lynch enterprise has now grown far beyond the limits of a private business undertaking, and has become an important political factor which England will often make use of to further or to conceal her aims in South-West Persia.

The above-related failures with the Lurs have put a stop to the regulating of the waters of the Karun; the work would not pay financially, and the experts do not appear to be agreed as to whether the construction of locks is necessary, or whether it will suffice merely to dredge out a channel. Breadth, depth, and current vary with the time of year.

The writer then describes the Karun River and the poverty of Arabistan in spite of its great natural fertility, attributing it to the plundering of the inhabitants by the Arab Sheikh, nobody daring to buy or cultivate more land than is absolutely necessary for his needs.

He then relates the oppressive measures by which the Sheikhs compel the owners of date-palm plantations to surrender their rights to them; and says that it is by such means that Sheikh Hassal, of Mohammerah, and his son-in-law, Sheikh Haji Ali Rais, have become the possessors of nearly all the palm forests from Ahwaz, Mohammerah and the Shat Jinauh to the Turkish frontier, and that this is the reason why great stretches are devoid of inhabitants, trees, or plants.

Sheikh Hassal, however, who is the third most important factor in South-Western Persia, is jealously courted by both the others; the Tehran Government has granted him titles and honours, and the English, or Anglo-Indians, practical as ever, have sent him six mountain guns . . . their fitness for use is doubtful, the English in Ahwaz jested over the present . . .

They also jested at another thing, which was all the more distasteful to me, as I could answer nothing. This was the efforts of the Germans who wanted to compete with them and could not. The matter is as follows: The Hamburg-America line has, as is known, in a praiseworthy manner started a monthly steamer service to the Gulf up as far as Bussorah. Its agents are Messrs. Wöckhaus and Co., well known in connection with the Abu Masa incident, and who have houses in Bushire, Lingah, and Bussorah. They have nominated the above-mentioned Sheikh Haji Ali Rais, who has an evil reputation as head of the smuggling trade in the whole of the Gulf, as their agent in Mohammerah after, as he told me, the English and Russian Companies had turned him out. The firm found itself in a dilemma; there is no European house in Mohammerah to which the agency could be intrusted; and of the natives, the Sheikh is the only one who can offer financial security, and who possesses knowledge of international trade—he is said to manage the interests of the Company very skilfully.

The writer goes on to say that he does not know whether the Hamburg-America line receives any subsidy from the State, and suggests that it should establish a station at Mohammerah and institute a steamer service between that place and Bussorah. The concession for making this service a regular passenger and goods service, for which there is great need, can quite well be obtained.

In view of the suspicious feeling towards England of all concerned, German initiative in this direction would not be likely to meet with opposition. Quite apart from the political side of the question, every one is tired of the tyranny of the house of Lynch, which at present enjoys an absolute monopoly. As an instance, a Dutch firm established here had to ask for the intervention of the English Legation in order to compel Lynch to further their export trade to Mohammerah by transferring goods to a sea-going steamer, and the Legation had to draw the attention of the Lynch Company to the fact that they are a subsidized Company, which must not allow itself to be influenced by private aims or jealousies.

Ahwaz on the Karun, end of June.

II. The Naphtha District: German Trade.

The writer begins by describing the great natural advantages of Shuster, due to its position at the junction of the two arms of the Karun, situated between the Arab population of the south, and the Lur tribes of Central Persia, its importance as the principal exchange mart for the whole trade between the Gulf and the north, and the

great fertility of the soil. He deplors that in spite of the advantages Shuster is being ruined by the ignorance and incapacity of the Government.

"Only twenty years ago Shuster had between 40,000 and 50,000 inhabitants; to-day the neglect of all sanitary measures, plague, and cholera, constant raids by the Lurs, and the oppression of the officials have reduced the number to less than half. . . .

"As late as 1880 the trade of Shuster was far greater than that of Dizful and Kermanshah; to-day, in spite of the opening of the Karun steamer route, it is far behind that of both. Finally, Shuster is the victim of the powerlessness of the Government to compel the Lur tribes to open the important trade route Dizful-Khoramabad—or to put it otherwise, the victim of the fear of England's further advance."

The writer then describes the state of ruin and decay into which the town has fallen: "Whereas, by virtue of its communications by land and water in all directions, its extensive hinterland, and its commanding situation, it should be, in both a military and commercial sense, the most important town of all Southern Persia; in fact, the third in importance in the whole kingdom after Tehran and Tabreez. When added to this it is remembered that it is in the middle of the naphtha district, it will be agreed that it is remarkably favoured by nature."

The writer then describes the naphtha district, its situation, extent, and apparent richness in oil, and the failure of the inhabitants to appreciate the wealth lying at their door. He divides the oil-producing zone into three parts: The northern, from the frontier to Shuster, which cannot at present be worked on account of the closing of the roads by the Lurs; the second, the regions Kalehur-Chora-Gazi, three or four days' journey from Ahwaz; and the third, the region Chordin-Ram Hormuz. He then gives an account of the borings of the Burmah Oil Company at Chordin, and the promising results communicated to him by the engineer, the works so far being nothing more than experimental. From another source he hears that the cautious procedure of the Company is meant to exclude competition, and that they are only making sufficient borings at present to insure their Concessions being confirmed.

"And now a word about this Concession. Concessions, like everything else in the East, are a question of bakshish—bakshish to the Ministry in Tehran, bakshish to the Bakhtiari Khans or Arab Sheikhs concerned, and bakshish to the Seyid or Seyids, who, by an unwritten law, can decide by one word the permissibility or not of desecrating the soil by borings. Without bakshish no Concessions. Every one has to reckon with this.

"At the present moment, however, I repeat again, this is especially the case as regards the English. They must have paid very considerable bakshish for their Concession, and it is well worth their while, for the Anglo-Indian Government have secured a great prize. The Oil Company in Chordin has created a new 'factor of development' by which British interests in South Persia have again been multiplied, but that the English will obtain a further Concession is, to judge from my experiences, impossible.

"It should, therefore, not be difficult for the subject of another Power to obtain a Concession for borings in the middle zone. I do not know whether the northern part of this zone has been examined at the naphtha-producing points. According to the natives, it has not been.

"If preliminary borings were to give favourable results, its exploitation would, considering the facilities for transport and the proximity of the Karun, at least cover expenses. Take, for example, the attempted exploitation of the wells north of Bagdad in Turkish territory, and it is no extravagant prophecy that that region will one day seriously compete with Baku.

"Could not some German Company now institute a new 'factor of development' in South Persia? It would be well worth the attempt. Two fields are open: first, as above indicated, the exploitation of the unappropriated naphtha springs; and, secondly, the encouragement of the import of German wares by means of an independent agency of the Hamburg Steamer Company, such as the firm of Wöckhaus in Mohammerah.

"In Ahwaz there is, as a matter of fact, a well-established Dutch firm with branches in Dizful, Shuster and Ram Hormuz, which has regular business relations with Germany. Why should they not establish a branch in Mohammerah?

"German imports are certainly on the increase in the Gulf, and yet how few German wares I have seen in the bazaars!

"I know, and every merchant will agree, that we cannot enter into competition with English Manchester goods and cotton fabrics, but where is the German preserve industry, for instance? Where are German chemical products, and German sugar?

"Nothing but English, French, and Belgian wares! . . .

"England feels herself at home in South-Western Persia, and that is the reason for

her moderation in the Anglo-Russian Agreement, under which she only claims the east as her sphere of interest, and tacitly concedes the south-west as neutral; there she is on safe ground, since the house of Lynch has become a power in this part.

"But the principle of the open door must hold good here also; we do not want to infringe upon the interests of the English house either on the Tigris or on the Karun, but we demand freedom for our commercial and industrial activity in the 'neutral zone.'"

Akavaz on the Karun, end of June.

[32245]

No. 531.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 16.)

(No. 308.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 16, 1908.

BUNDER ABBAS Consular guard.

With reference to your telegram No. 256 of the 10th instant, it does not seem possible to dispense with small escort of mounted men who accompany Consul when he makes official visits, or when he is on tour.

[32338]

No. 532.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 17.)

India Office, September 16, 1908.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter dated the 9th instant as to the proposed application of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. to the Persian Government for a Concession to extract red oxide on the island of Sirri, I am directed to say that, in the opinion of Viscount Morley, it would be better that no mention of royalties should be made by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran in addressing the Persian Government.

It appears to Lord Morley that if this question were raised by Mr. Marling it would in effect be a protest against the grant of the Concession by the Persian Government. As explained in Sir A. Godley's letter of the 2nd June last, Lord Morley does not consider that any such protest is necessary.

He would suggest for Sir E. Grey's consideration that it would be sufficient if Mr. Marling were to point out to the Persian Government, with reference to Sir A. Hardinge's note of the 15th June, 1904, that the controversy as to the ownership of Sirri had not yet been reciprocally settled, and that the grant of a Concession to an applicant not approved by His Majesty's Government would lead to the assertion by them of the claims of the Jowasmi Chief.*

The agent of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Co. might at the same time be informed that no objection will be taken by His Majesty's Government to his application for the Concession from the Persian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[32315]

No. 533.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 17.)

War Office, September 16, 1908.

Sir,

I AM commanded by the Army Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 7th instant, requesting that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs may be informed of the grounds upon which the Army Council base their opinion that, from the point of view of Imperial military interests, the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed should be maintained.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Army Council indorse the views expressed by the Government of India in their despatch of the 7th November, 1907, and are of opinion that the interruption of the system of obtaining intelligence which has been

* See Part XIV, No. 335.

so successfully inaugurated by the Military Attaché at Meshed would be disadvantageous to the Imperial as well as to the Indian army.

3. Although the conclusion of the recent Convention has no doubt improved our relations with Russia and removed much cause for anxiety, the Army Council consider that it would be imprudent, by withdrawing our Attaché from Meshed, to deprive India, and, indirectly, the General Staff, of a source of accurate information regarding events on the northern frontier of Afghanistan and in Central Asia.

4. It further seems desirable that the working of the new arrangements under which local disputes between Russian and Afghan frontier officials are to be settled should be carefully watched, the more so as, judging from past experience, the reports of such local disputes are liable to produce a feeling of unrest and anxiety, due to distortion and exaggeration, unless they pass through the censorship of a trained and competent Military Intelligence Officer.

5. The sphere of activity which Seistan offers to the Russian officer who has been appointed Military Attaché in that region is a limited one, the information which he may be able to acquire can be little more than is already at the disposal of the Russian military authorities, and the loss entailed by the withdrawal of our Attaché from Meshed would not, from a military point of view, be counterbalanced by the removal of the Russian officer from Seistan.

I am, &c.

(Signed) R. H. BRADE.

[32035]

No. 534.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 367.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 17, 1908.

MR. MARLING'S telegram No. 306 [Tabreez].

Suggest to Russian Government that we should press for a reply.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 260.)

[32427]

No. 535.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 18.)

(No. 168.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 18, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

As Turkish troops are now being withdrawn, M. Teharykoff considers the moment an opportune one for the Representatives of the two Governments to make the identic communication to the Persian Government at Tehran.

In the event of your concurrence, he will send the necessary instructions to M. de Hartwig.

[32428]

No. 536.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 18.)

(No. 169.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 18, 1908.

SHAH and Constitution. Your telegram No. 367 of the 17th instant.

M. Teharykoff informs me that he is willing to press for a reply. He has, however, asked me to embody the suggestion in writing, and will then send a definite reply to our proposal.

According to M. Teharykoff, Shah had given assurances in the desired sense to M. de Hartwig, and had said that he would "in a few days" make the public declaration. Russian Minister has been instructed by telegraph, while thanking Shah for his assurance, to express the hope that the declaration will in a very few days be made. M. Teharykoff informed me that he had also left it to Russian Minister to suggest, so as to avoid postponement of announcement until pacification of Tabreez,

that the Shah should proclaim his resolve to hold elections over the whole country with the exception of Tabreez, where in existing circumstances they were impossible. Such a step would show that fear of revolutionaries was not making him yield, and might further be of assistance in restoring tranquillity in the above-mentioned town.

[31732]

No. 537.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 370.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 18, 1908.

WE think that it would be better to defer communication to Persian Government respecting Turco-Persian frontier until the evacuation of the Turkish troops has assumed a somewhat more definite character.

[32036]

No. 538.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 262.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 18, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 307: Acquisition of control of Ahwaz line and exchange of telegraphs.

Even at the cost of some delay in the question of exchange of lines, which Russian Government are anxious to expedite, we should do all we can to hasten the satisfactory solution of the Ahwaz line, which, from our point of view, is the more important.

[32507]

No. 539.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 264.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 18, 1908.

JOINT communication to the Shah respecting the convocation of the Assembly.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires called at the Foreign Office to-day, and, under instructions from his Government, stated that lithographed copies of the communication made to the Shah were on the day following the representation to His Majesty distributed in a changed form in the bazaar, all mention having been omitted of the Russian Government having made the communication jointly with His Majesty's Government.

The Russian Minister had been to the Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where it was suggested to him that Mr. Churchill was responsible for the document in question.

You should lose no time in making careful inquiries as to whether there is any foundation for this suggestion, and, if not, as to whether it emanated from any other member of your staff.

[32566]

No. 540.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 309.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 19, 1908.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN joint communication to the Shah. My telegram No. 306 of the 14th instant.

Last night the Minister for Foreign Affairs sent me the Shah's reply, of which following is the substance:—

"I am taking steps to form a Medjliss in conformity with the requirements of the country and with religion and such as not to lead to a recurrence of disorders, and I am thus fulfilling my promises. I hope that I shall be able to issue a Proclamation for the Assembly of the Medjliss on the date mentioned by the two Governments in their communication to me; but till after the restoration of order at

Tabreez, when the Persian Government will have leisure to make the necessary arrangements, the Parliament will not open."

M. de Hartwig tells me that the negotiations at Tabreez are in progress and that fighting has ceased. I have received no very recent news myself.

In view of the fact that, in spite of the advice of the two Governments to take conciliatory steps at Tabreez, His Majesty permitted the Maku Kurds to attack the town, the reply of the Shah appears to me especially unsatisfactory. Moreover, His Majesty gives no assurance that the organic laws will be maintained.

[32569]

No. 541.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 310.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 19, 1908.

JOINT Anglo-Russian representation to the Shah. Your telegram No. 264 of the 18th instant.

Except the signed document handed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs for His Majesty, no copy whatever has issued from this Legation. In accordance with the text of the communication telegraphed by yourself, no mention was made of Russia in the English note.

On the 11th instant Ala-es-Sultaneh, who came to inquire whether I had any knowledge of how the alleged copy had got into circulation, told me that the Prime Minister and he had copies, and later, from a totally independent source, I accidentally learnt that a person at the Shah's camp had given out the exact substance, but not the text, of the joint representation. It was known in the bazaars on the morning of the 9th instant from this source. I told the Minister for Foreign Affairs of this in a private letter, and I also verbally informed M. de Hartwig.

On the evening of the 8th an incorrect and somewhat exaggerated version of the object of the dragoman's visit to the Shah, the fact of which was at once known, came to the knowledge of the correspondent of the "Times," and I was asked by the latter for details, but these I refused, and desired him, if he intended to telegraph to London, to omit certain misstatements. On the 11th, when I told this to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he made no mention of Mr. Churchill, and expressed himself as satisfied.

It is probable that this is the origin of reports, which have doubtless been circulated by the reactionary party, whose object it is to induce the Shah to believe that we have not really got Russia's support.

The fact that the joint communication has become public cannot, in my opinion, injure the Shah, for, if his professions are sincere, he could avoid the appearance of yielding to Tabreez by following the advice of the two Powers.

Following is very confidential:—

Mr. Churchill was told on the 10th instant by the Austrian Minister that M. de Hartwig had told him the substance of the communication, but he declined to say on what date he had been told.

[32565]

No. 542.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 311.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 19, 1908.

BAST in His Majesty's Legation.

Last night some thirty merchants and priests went to the Legation in Tehran. One of them stated that they would force the gates within a few nights.

At intervals during the night the streets round the Legation were patrolled by Cossacks.

[32570]

No. 543.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 312.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 19, 1908.

ON the first day of the annual races, which took place on the 16th instant at Gulahek, a Persian Cossack, who declined to leave the course, attacked one of our Indian guard who were acting as ground police. An attack was then made on our men by the Cossack, who drew his sword, and was joined by some ten others. Three of our men, who were unarmed, but carried light sticks, were slightly wounded in the mêlée by sword cuts. Major Stokes, who was in charge of the policing arrangements on the ground, called his men off, and was attacked by a Cossack, but not touched. Order was restored on the arrival of Colonel Liakhoff, who appeared almost immediately on the scene.

Colonel Liakhoff has written to me, informing me that the soldier who attacked the Military Attaché has been degraded to the ranks and condemned to ten days' dark cell and loss of pay, and the others have received punishment in accordance with the gravity of their misbehaviour. Colonel Liakhoff also expressed his regret at the occurrence.

I had warmly urged on Colonel Liakhoff in a previous conversation that, in my opinion, the fact that a Cossack should have attempted to strike Major Stokes constituted the real gravity of the incident, and I requested that in administering punishment this might be taken into special consideration. Colonel Liakhoff said that he himself had not seen the attack, and would not admit that it had been made.

I have accepted Colonel Liakhoff's letter as closing the incident in view of the fact that the guilty Cossack has been specially punished, but I cannot but hold that the punishment is really inadequate reparation, so outrageous was the conduct of the Cossacks, and only acceptable in view of the importance of keeping on good terms with Russia.

I have given M. de Hartwig to understand that I should have officially demanded a much greater measure of reparation from the Persian Government if the Brigade had been officered by Persians.

M. de Hartwig and Colonel Liakhoff were both perfectly cordial to me.

[32571]

No. 544.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 313.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 19, 1908.

QUESTION of bast.

Referring to my telegram No. 311 of to-day, I have been informed by the German Minister that there is some probability of people taking refuge in his Legation, and I believe the Turkish Embassy is similarly threatened. Measures will probably be taken to prevent this by arranging patrols to guard those Missions as well as His Majesty's Legation, which are all situated in the same street. I propose, with your approval, should this be done, not to make any protest so long as the patrols are not offensively obtrusive; but in the case of His Majesty's Legation, any system of guards must necessarily be more marked than in that of the other Missions owing to its detached position.

I have sent the Minister for Foreign Affairs a private warning that any measures taken must not exceed the limits of courtesy due towards a foreign Legation.

[32427]

No. 545.

Sir Edward Grey to Consul-General Wratistlaw.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 19, 1908.

[TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.]

Please inform me whether the withdrawal of Turkish troops has begun.

[32338]

No. 546.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 266.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 19, 1908.

RED Oxide Concession on Sirri Island.

Instead of course proposed in your telegram No. 291 of the 4th instant, we consider it will be sufficient if you inform the local agent of Manchester firm that His Majesty's Government will take no exception to his application to the Persian Government for a Concession, and if you point out to the Persian Government, with reference to Sir A. Hardinge's note of the 15th June, 1904, that the grant of a Concession by them to an applicant not approved by His Majesty's Government would lead to the assertion by the latter of the claims of the Jowasmi Chief, since the ownership of Sirri has not yet been reciprocally settled.

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No. 547.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 266.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 20, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Please refer to telegram No. 168 from Sir A. Nicolson.

Though he assures me that the orders were sent, the Grand Vizier has been unable to confirm the withdrawal of troops, and no news of the actual withdrawal of troops has been received by either the Russian or Persian Ambassadors, or by myself. I think that the presentation of the identic note would be premature in the circumstances.

[32619]

No. 548.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 21.)

(No. 580.)

Sir,

Constantinople, September 16, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith two despatches from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting on the agitation among the Mujtehedes of Nedjef for a Parliament in Persia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 548.

Major Ramsay to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bagdad, August 7, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report the following facts for the information of the Government of India.

2. The Government of India is aware that the recent agitation in favour of popular government has been largely organized at, and controlled from, Nedjef, the four leading men at which place are: Mirza Muhammad Hussein Mirza Khalil, a very old man, whose name carries great weight, but who is himself practically beyond taking any active part in political movements—the Parliamentary party have, however, the full support of his influence; Mullah Muhammad Kadhim, Khorassani, who is the active and leading member of the political religious party; Sheikh Abdulla Mazendarani, who seems to associate himself with the actions of Mullah Kadhim and Haji Mirza Hussein; and Seyed Kadhim, Yezdi, who appears to take no part in political agitation.

3. Since the Shah obtained the upper hand in Tehran these Mujtehedes have not been able to send or receive telegrams from Persia, and I understand that they find it difficult even to get information by letter; they are therefore in a difficult position. They are largely responsible for the existence of the Popular party as a factor in practical politics, and now that that party is in great trouble they are unable to assist it.

I had heard from the Vice-Consul at Karbala that the Mujtehed at Nedjef had been in communication with the Persian community in Constantinople by means of the Turkish telegraph wires, which had been directly connected for the purpose, but the Vice-Consul had not been able to learn the nature of the conversation that had taken place. The spokesman at Constantinople was reported by the Vice-Consul to have been one Syed Muhammad Taki or Syed Murtaza.

4. Affairs were in this position on the 4th August, when a man came to the Residency and asked if I would fix a time to see him. The man was Sheikh Ismail, son of Habibulla, Reshti; he is the son-in-law of Mullah Muhammad Kadhim, Khorassani, and I understand that the Mullah's son came with him as far as Bagdad. I asked him to come in at once; he came in, and then said that he had not brought his papers with him because he expected that I would fix some other time for an interview, but that he would produce papers showing that he was speaking on behalf of the leading Mujtehed of Nedjef, and also copies of certain telegrams which had passed. The following paraphrase of a telegram which I sent on the 4th August to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran and repeated to Constantinople gives the gist of the conversation that took place:—

"The following questions have been put to me by a messenger of the leading Mujtehed of Nedjef:

"1. When the Constitution was first granted in Persia it was obtained, so the Mujtehed say, with the support of the British Government. Will the British Government still support the Parliamentary party?

"2. Will I give the Mujtehed my advice as to their best line of conduct in the immediate future?

"The feeling against the Russian Government and the Russian Cossack officer is very bitter.

"The Turkish wire has been placed at the disposal of the Mujtehed, and they have had a conversation with the Persians in Constantinople.

"I understand that the Mujtehed have authorized the Sultan to occupy Azerbaijan, urging that the Shah has fired on the Mahomedan sacred book and on the places of worship, and that he has expelled the religious leaders of the people, and that the Sultan, as the head of the Mahomedan world, should avenge the insults.

"The priests are cut off from all communication with Tehran; they seem distracted by the difficulties of their position, and they probably now doubt the wisdom of having invited the interference of the Sultan.

"After hearing the messenger, I deprecated inviting foreign interference. I said that I did not think that Russia would allow Turkey to take Azerbaijan without going to war, and I remarked that, as far as I knew, there were few places in Constantinople where a Shah could publicly say his prayers.

"I had an engagement to call on the Vali, and therefore pleaded this as a reason for putting an end to the conversation.

"The messenger is likely to come and see me again. Does the Minister wish me to take any particular line, or merely to say that I am not authorized to discuss Persian politics? I should be grateful for brief news of events in the Persian provinces."

The conversation of which the above is a telegraphic abstract took several hours. It seemed to me that my visitor was inclined to argue that the constitutional party had been encouraged by us, and that we were therefore responsible for the evils that had befallen it. I said that I was not authorized by my Government to discuss Persian politics, neither was I sufficiently well instructed to enable me to do so with confidence, even if what I said was only taken as an expression of my private opinion.

Though it seems fairly clear that the Mujtehed of Nedjef have only turned to the British Representative because they find themselves helpless, I was anxious not to give my visitor any kind of rebuff. I therefore explained that direct foreign interference was out of the question in the internal affairs of Persia, that the popular party had undertaken a serious and difficult business when they set themselves against the Shah, that it was unreasonable to expect that the Shah and his entourage would submissively yield up all their privileges, and that, putting aside the question of my right, in my present position at Bagdad, to offer advice, it was impossible for any one to form a sound opinion as to what should be done unless he had some fairly accurate knowledge

of the present condition of affairs in Tehran and in the provinces. I said that the only responsible spokesman for His Majesty's Government as regards Persian affairs was the British Minister at Tehran; but that, if my visitor showed me documentary proof that he was entitled to speak to me on behalf of the leading Mujtehed of Nedjef, I could telegraph their message to the Minister and communicate to them his reply. Sheikh Ismail left me saying that I had picked his brains and told him nothing, to which I replied that if he would come and see me later I would try to be more communicative, as I should then be able to see his papers, and I would, in the meantime, study the papers in my office dealing with the Persian internal politics.

5. I have seen what purport to be copies of some of the messages which passed between the Mujtehed and the Persians in Constantinople when the wire was placed at their disposal. Though these telegrams deal with political matters, they are written rather in the involved style usually adopted in Oriental theological discussions, and the copies are badly written; consequently they are very difficult to understand. It seems, however, that Syed Muhammad Taki or Syed Murtaza, as the spokesman of the Persians in Constantinople, asked the Mujtehed to give their assistance, and assured them that they could now telegraph freely all they wished to say. The Mujtehed replied that they had done all they could, but that now they were entirely cut off from communication with Persia, and were therefore not in a position to do anything. Amongst others, they seem to have sent a message to the Sultan saying that the good people had suffered and the bad had been successful, that religion was out of favour, that the foreigners were getting all the advantages, that the people needed help, that the Shah had broken promises made on the Koran, and that the Sultan should interfere, as he alone could bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion and prevent foreigners from interfering and gaining profit from the troubles of the Mahomedans.

6. Hitherto it has not been possible for the Resident to cultivate any friendly relations with the Mujtehed of Nedjef, for they would hold no kind of communication with him—mostly, I think, because they were afraid of the Turkish Government. Now that every one seems free to say what he thinks, it is possible that the Mujtehed will be less unapproachable. For this reason it seems desirable for me to seize the present opportunity of getting on good terms with them.

7. Up to the evening of the 7th August I have received no answer to my telegram of the 4th August, nor has Sheikh Ismail been to see me again. I have however, been approached with an inquiry as to whether I would arrange to get telegrams sent to Tehran on behalf of the resident Persians. I have replied that it is impossible for me to know who is entitled to approach me as the representative of the resident Persians, and that I can therefore have nothing to do with the business. I was then asked if I would send telegrams in cypher on behalf of the Mujtehed. To this I replied that if the leading Mujtehed sent a duly authorized man to discuss the matter with me and explain exactly what they wanted I should then be able to let them know whether I could help them or not.

8. I am sending a copy of this letter to His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran, in the hope that he will be able to give me some idea as to the policy which he would like me to adopt in dealing with the Mujtehed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, Major, Political Resident in
Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic
Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.

P.S. August 10.—His Majesty's Minister telegraphs that the policy of His Majesty's Government is one of strict non-intervention.

J. R.

Inclosure 2 in No. 548.

Major Ramsay to Government of India.

Sir,

Bagdad, August 17, 1908.

IN continuation of my letter No. 719, dated the 7th August, 1908, I have the honour to inform you that Sheikh Ismail has not again been to see me, and that I have received instructions from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran that the Legation will give no kind of help to either party.

I have now received from the Vice-Consul at Karbala what purports to be a copy

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of a telegram which was sent by the leading Mujtehed of Nedjef to the Chamberlain of the Sultan. I inclose a translation for information. The Vice-Consul reports that the Shiabs are indignant at this appeal to the Sunni Sultan, and I hear that objection is particularly taken to the use of the term "Amir-el-Muminin," which, among Shiabs, is only applied to Ali, the father of Hassan and Hussein.

2. It is said that in later telegraphic correspondence between the Persians in Constantinople and the Ulema of Nedjef the latter have been begged to start for Persia and announce the fact of their having started by telegraph. A telegram has also been received by the Turkish (i.e., from Azerbaijan) students at Nedjef instructing them to press the Ulema to go to Persia. The Ulema, however, have so far made no move; they evidently do not like the prospect, and they have given as their reason that they cannot go unless all the leading Mujtehed are unanimous. This is perhaps an attempt to turn public resentment against Seyyed Kadhim, Yezdi, who has throughout held aloof from political intrigues.

3. As far as I can learn the popularity of the Medjliss has waned very much since the Shah regained power.

4. The story that is current in Bagdad is that the Liberal party in Tabreez has received reinforcements from the surrounding districts, but that 2,000 of the Liberals have been killed, with the approval of one Hassan Agha, who is said to be a Mujtehed at Tabreez.

5. Sheikh Ismael left Bagdad for Bombay on the 16th August; I have not been able to learn his immediate object in undertaking this journey, and it may be that his real intention is to land in the South of Persia. I am communicating with the Consul at Bussorah with a view to the man's movements being reported.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, Major, Political Resident in
Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic
Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.

Inclosure 3 in No. 518.

Nedjef Mujtehed to Haji Ali Pasha, First Chamberlain of the Sultan.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.)

[Undated.]

WE supplicants of the high Government and beseechers of the Sultan's compassion, after fulfilling our duties of prayer and expressing the praises due by us to the Amir-el-Muminin, the Shadow of God on the People and the Protector of the Islamic World (may God extend his shadow over the heads of the Moslem Amen!), beg to state that we are companions and servants of the sublime religious law sheltered by the protection of the illustrious Government. We have always been "soldiers of prayer" to that sacred person, glorifying the high word because our belief is that by it the egg of Islam was protected, and by its supremacy the law of the best of mankind was preserved, otherwise it would have no sign or mark left and it would be ruined by the occupation of the unbelievers. In this connection we never drew back from trying to advise the Persian Power (may God preserve it!) and maintain his (the Shah's) honour and respect until he brought about disturbances between the Government and the subjects which resulted in fear and dispersion from what the hands of bad people committed and from what the hands of tyrants gained; so much so that the Moslem women and their children were bought by misbelievers. Mahomedans in Persia were in danger of being ruined and kidnapped by the hands of tyrannical foreigners. The people applied to us asking for our intercession because they supposed that the Sharaa was to be obeyed and the word of its people ought to be listened to. We did our best to preserve the nation and begged for obedience from the Government by sufficient advice and eloquent and ample preachings. We also begged the Shah (may God preserve his dominions!) to sign the demands of the nation with a view to protecting the religion and for fear of the victory of the infidels until he showed his consent and promised them firmly and sealed the glorious Book of God. The people placed confidence in him, and we prayed for the protection of the religion. A few days passed by and he started this tyranny, withdrawing his firm promises, destroying the kind respect of the subjects, putting behind his back the Book of God, and ill-treating its prescriptions, which are not hidden to you. We complain to God of this serious calamity and beg for the compassion of the Sultan of Islam in this desperate misfortune,

which has no equal and for which there is no refuge but in that holy spot. In that we pray for the putting out of the flame, the stamping out of the prevailing discord and the removal of the grievances from this nation, the claim of Moslems' rights, and their safety from the victory of the infidels, who are hidden ready for attacks. Among the facts that our belief gathered is the ambition of the compassionate Sultan for conciliation. We beg from the compassion of that sublime spot and the pity of the high Government to exercise kindness before the intervention of foreigners and the lopping off of the nation and the country from every side.

May the darkness be lighted by your justice and the grief removed by your kindness!

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No. 549.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 21.)

(No. 314.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 21, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 309 of the 19th instant.

I am informed by M. de Hartwig that, in his opinion, the reply of the Shah is unfortunate, and that he is sending a warm remonstrance to His Majesty, with the advice that the Rescript of the new Electoral Law should be published at once.

I agreed with M. de Hartwig that it would be wise for the Shah to do so in view of the signs of growing discontent, always provided that he did not put off indefinitely the assembly of the Medjliss on the strength of this concession.

The following is very confidential:—

I cannot help thinking that M. de Hartwig hopes to forestall further joint representations by inducing the Shah to take this course.

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No. 550.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 21.)

(No. 315.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 21, 1908.

SILURI oxide. Your telegram No. 266 of the 19th instant.

In the communication to the Persian Government I would suggest the insertion after "applicant" of the words "and on conditions."

As reported in my despatch No. 88 of the 21st April last, the Company has not yet been recognized by the Persian Government as a British firm, and this somewhat complicates the matter.

I could impress on the agent of the Company, if you approve, that it would be desirable to apply as representing a British firm, and, if the Concession is granted, to get the fact recorded in the document. To do this would, moreover, be in his own interest.

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No. 551.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 378.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.

THE Shah and the Constitution.

Please refer to telegram No. 309 of the 19th instant from Tehran.

I certainly cannot consider His Majesty's reply satisfactory. There is no reference in it as to the organic laws being maintained.

You should ascertain what further steps the Russian Government would be ready to take, so that our recent joint representations may lead to a satisfactory issue.

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No. 552.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 270.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.

I APPROVE your action with regard to the incident reported in your telegram No. 312 of the 19th instant.
No further action need be taken in the matter.

[32571]

No. 553.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 271.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.

I APPROVE the action proposed by you in your telegram No. 313 of the 19th instant and the warning you have addressed to Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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No. 554.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.**Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.*

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to refer you to the letter from this Office of the 6th March, 1905, forwarding copies of correspondence relative to the appointment of a Military Attaché to His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, and to that of the 18th December of the same year.

The Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury are already aware that this post was created as a temporary measure on the suggestion of the Government of India.

The creation of the post as a temporary one was advocated by Sir A. Hardinge, at that time His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, who subsequently expressed the opinion that it should be permanently maintained.

Sir A. Hardinge's view was shared by his successor, Sir C. Spring-Rice, and is also held by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran and Consul-General at Meshed.

On the 21st January last Mr. Marling addressed a despatch to Sir E. Grey, inquiring whether any decision had been reached as to the advisability of making the appointment permanent, and Sir E. Grey accordingly caused a letter to be addressed to the India Office indorsing Mr. Marling's opinion that the post should be maintained, and requesting information as to the conclusion which might be arrived at on the subject.

The India Office, in reply, forwarded a copy of a despatch from the Government of India strongly recommending the maintenance of the post, and stated that Viscount Morley was disposed to acquiesce in its continuance for a further fixed period, subject to eventual reconsideration and to the condition that the cost involved should be equally divided between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

Having regard, on the one hand, to the strong opinion expressed by the Government of India that the post should be maintained, and, on the other, to the expense which would be incurred by the Imperial Exchequer in consequence of the permanent existence of two British Military Attachés in Persia on the proposed terms, Sir E. Grey addressed to Mr. Marling a telegram inquiring his view as to the advisability of abolishing the post of Military Attaché to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

Mr. Marling replied by telegraph strongly deprecating this step.

Sir E. Grey still felt unable to recommend the Lords Commissioners to sanction the charge to British funds of half the expense involved by the maintenance of a Military Attaché at His Majesty's Consulate-General at Meshed, but the Secretary of State for India adduced further and cogent arguments in favour of the arrangement proposed, and suggested that the question whether the appointment could or could not be regarded as of importance to Imperial interests from the military point of view should be referred to the consideration of the Army Council.

The Army Council was therefore consulted, and gave an opinion strongly favourable to the permanent maintenance of the post at Meshed.

They indorsed the views expressed by the Government of India, and expressed the opinion that the interruption of the system of obtaining intelligence which had been so successfully inaugurated by the Military Attaché at Meshed would be disadvantageous to the Imperial as well as to the Indian army.

They stated that, although the conclusion of the recent Convention had no doubt improved our relations with Russia and removed much cause for anxiety, they considered that it would be imprudent, by withdrawing our Attaché from Meshed, to deprive India, and indirectly the General Staff, of a source of accurate information regarding events on the northern frontier of Afghanistan and in Central Asia.

It seemed, further, desirable that the working of the new arrangements under which local disputes between Russian and Afghan frontier officials were to be settled should be carefully watched, the more so as, judging from past experience, the reports of such local disputes were liable to produce a feeling of unrest and anxiety, due to distortion and exaggeration, unless they passed through the censorship of a trained and competent military intelligence officer.

In view of this opinion and of the earnest recommendation of the India Office, the Government of India, and all His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular officers on the spot, Sir E. Grey considers that there can be no question of objecting to the charge on Imperial funds of one-half of the expense involved, which amounts, in all, to 574*l.* 8*s.*, 700*l.*, or 927*l.* 4*s.* a-year, according to the rank of the officer employed.

I am accordingly to request that this proposal may be submitted to the early and favourable consideration of the Lords Commissioners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

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No. 555.

*Foreign Office to Treasury.**Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.*

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, conveying the assent of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to the proposed employment of sixteen infantry to increase the guard at His Majesty's Consulate at Bunder Abbas and to the charge to Imperial funds of half the expense involved.

I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey inquired, by telegraph, the opinion of His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran with regard to the suggestion that the existing detachment of cavalry should be withdrawn as soon as the infantry detachment is in attendance.

Mr. Marling has now replied that it seems impossible to dispense with a small escort of cavalry to accompany His Majesty's Consul when making official visits or on tour, and in view of this opinion I am to express Sir E. Grey's hope that their Lordships will not press their suggestion.

I am to point out that the proposal of the Government of India involved the retention of the four cavalry, and that the cost of the increase, half of which their Lordships have consented to impose on Imperial funds, was estimated accordingly, so that their maintenance will not be the cause of any expense beyond that already sanctioned.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[32036]

No. 556.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 12th instant, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith decypher of a telegram from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran relative to the question of

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telegraph lines in Persia, together with copy of a telegram which he has addressed to Mr. Marling in reply to his communication.*

Viscount Morley will observe, from a perusal of the latter message, that Sir E. Grey is of opinion that the completion of the negotiations having for their object the acquisition by His Majesty's Government of the control of the Ahwaz-Borasjun-Mohammerah line is of greater importance to British interests than the consent of the Persian Government to the proposed exchange of control with Russia, and that the solution of the former question should be expedited now at the cost of some delay in that of the latter.

I am accordingly to ask that, if Lord Morley concurs in this view, he will cause instructions to be sent to the Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department at Tehran to conduct his negotiations on the lines indicated.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[32785]

No. 557.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 21, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter of the 16th instant, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a telegram, as marked in the margin,† on the subject of the red oxide Concession on the Island of Sirri.

Sir E. Grey proposes, subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State for India, to authorize the proposed addition in the communication to the Persian Government, and the advice which Mr. Marling suggests that he should give to the Agent of the Company in Tehran.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[32910]

No. 558.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 172.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 22, 1908.

PERSIAN Constitution. Your telegram No. 378 of yesterday.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me he understands Russian Minister at Tehran has, in addition to the written reply, received a verbal assurance from the Shah that he would fulfil his promises as advised by the British and Russian Representatives.

M. Teharykow thinks that His Majesty preferred to give a verbal assurance, lest by consigning it to writing he might suffer loss of dignity and appear to be yielding to the advice or pressure of foreigners. He proposes that in the circumstances we should give him a few days to act up to his verbal promise before exercising any further pressure upon him.

[32912]

No. 559.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 267.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 22, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mosul reporting the arrival of two battalions of Turkish infantry from the Persian frontier. Mr. Wilkie Young further states that a third battalion is expected to return shortly, and that five other frontier battalions have, according to the Vali, been sent to Van and Bitlis.

* Nos. 522 and 538.

† No. 550.

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No. 560.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 296. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 22, 1908.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 366, Secret, of the 18th ultimo, inclosing an *aide-mémoire* from the Russian Government on the subject of railway construction in Persia.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires called at this Department on the 3rd instant, and stated that he had a message from the Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that he considered the present moment opportune for approaching the Persian Government on the subject, on the ground that there is a lull in German activity in Persia, owing to recent events in Turkey.

M. Poklevski was informed in reply that the Russian Memorandum raised some difficult questions, and read as if the extensions to Tehran, Resht, and Enzeli were all to be considered together. He gave it, however, as his opinion that this was not intended, and that the Russian Government had merely intended, out of courtesy, to communicate their views on these points. All they desired at present was to ascertain His Majesty's Government's views as to the Mohammerah-Julfa line. They hoped to be placed in possession of these at no distant date, though they understood the reason for deferring a communication until after Ministers had returned to London.

It was pointed out to M. Poklevski that the financial difficulty was serious for His Majesty's Government as well as for the Russian Government. He argued that it would not be difficult for His Majesty's Government to guarantee a loan, something of the kind having been contemplated by Lord Lansdowne in the case of the Bagdad Railway.

In conclusion, M. Poklevski was informed that the appointment of a Committee to consider the question in all its bearings was under consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[33010]

No. 561.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 316.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 23, 1908.

SHAH and Constitution.

Your telegram No. 269 of the 21st instant.

The Shah has given M. de Hartwig a half-promise that a Proclamation will be issued at once providing for elections to be held on the 27th October, and for the convocation of Parliament on the 14th November.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, who came to see me to-day, gave me an intimation in the same sense, and asked whether the proposal had my approval and support.

An audience with His Majesty was fixed for to-morrow, as his Highness said that His Majesty desired to see me.

[32910]

No. 562.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 384.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 23, 1908.

YOUR telegram No. 172.

Shah and Constitution.

We agree to proposed postponement.

(Repeated to Tehran, No. 273.)

[33047]

No. 563.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 24.)

Sir,

India Office, September 23, 1908.

IN reply to your letters of the 12th instant, I am directed to say that Viscount Morley concurs in the views of Sir E. Grey as to the arrangements to be made with the Russian Government for the exchange of the control of the Tehran-Meshed and Khaf-Nasratabad telegraph lines.

A draft Arrangement, prepared by the Director-in-chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, giving effect to the exchange on the lines now approved, is inclosed as requested for transmission to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg for discussion with the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 563.

Draft Memorandum of Working Arrangements, as between the British and Russian Governments, on the transfer of the control of the Tehran-Meshed Line, and of the Khaf-Nasratabad Section of the Meshed-Nasratabad Line.

WHEN the transfers of the control of the Tehran-Meshed telegraph line from the charge of the British authorities to that of the Russian authorities, and of the Khaf-Nasratabad section of the Meshed-Nasratabad telegraph line from the charge of the Russian authorities to that of the British authorities have been agreed to by the Persian Government, the following arrangements will be carried out on the lines, the control of which has been thus transferred:—

1. Tehran-Meshed Line.

(a.) The British authorities will remove from the line all the British staff employed on the maintenance, repair, and general upkeep of the line, and the duties connected therewith will be undertaken from the date of this removal by officials appointed by the Russian authorities, and will remain in their sole charge.

(b.) For the efficient transmission of British telegrams over the line a British telegraphist will be retained at Tehran, and one at Meshed.

(c.) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the Russian officials to these British telegraphists daily at stated hours, and for certain fixed periods distributed over the day and arranged in a suitable and equitable manner for the disposal of traffic.

(d.) The Persian Telegraph Administration has provided separate signalling rooms for the Russian and British telegraphists in the telegraph offices at Tehran and Meshed. At each of these offices the line wire terminates at present in the British room, is then connected by a commutator to the Persian signal room, where another commutator joins it over to the Russian room. When the transfer of control takes place the line wire will be terminated in the Russian rooms of the two offices, and have connection by commutators with the British and Persian rooms.

2. Meshed-Khaf Telegraph Lines.

(a.) The duties of maintaining, repairing, and supervising the line itself will remain, as at present, in the hands of the Russian telegraph officials.

(b.) For the efficient transmission of British telegrams one British telegraphist will be retained at Meshed, one at Turbat-i-Haidari, and one at Khaf.

(c.) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the Russian officials to these British telegraphists under conditions similar to those prescribed in paragraph 1 (c),

(d), for the transmission of British telegrams over the Tehran-Meshed line, and for office arrangements of commutators and connections.

3. Khaf-Nasratabad Telegraph Line.

(a.) The Russian authorities will remove from the line all the Russian staff employed on the maintenance, repair, and general upkeep of the line, and the duties connected therewith will from the date of this removal be undertaken by officials appointed by the British authorities and will remain in their sole charge.

(b.) For the efficient transmission of Russian telegrams over the line one Russian telegraphist will be retained at Nasratabad, one at Birjand, and one at Khaf.

(c.) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the British telegraph officials to these Russian telegraphists under conditions similar to those prescribed in paragraph 1 (c) for the transmission of British telegrams over the Tehran-Meshed line.

(d.) The line wire will be terminated in the British room of the different offices and connected by commutators to the Russian and Persian office rooms.

4. At any telegraph station worked jointly by Russian and British telegraphists where rooms for separate use by the Russian, British, and Persian telegraphists are not available and cannot be provided, the Persian office room will be used by the Russian and British telegraphists at the hours fixed for the transmission of their respective telegrams.

(Signed) H. A. KIRK.

September 18, 1908.

[33056]

No. 564.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 16th instant, relative to the Consular guard at Bunder Abbas.

India Office, September 23, 1908.

Inclosure in No. 564.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, September 16, 1908.

BUNDER ABBAS Consular guard (see Government of India letter dated the 4th June, 1908).

Treasury agree, as temporary measure for three years, to bear half cost of proposed employment of sixteen infantry. They suggest that, as soon as infantry arrive, existing cavalry detachment might be withdrawn.

[33116]

No. 565.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)

(No. 317.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 24, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution.

My telegram No. 316 of yesterday's date.

At the audience which I had with the Shah this morning His Majesty was most cordial, and expressed great desire for reform, especially in finances.

His Majesty promised me that the Proclamation of the new Electoral Law would be published to-day.

[32182]

No. 566.

Foreign Office to Director of Military Operations.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Director of Military Operations, and is directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of his letter of the 15th instant, forwarding abbreviated translations of articles on Arabistan, which have appeared in the "Berliner Tageblatt."

Sir E. Grey has received shorter summaries of the same articles from His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin, copies of which are forwarded herewith.*

Copies of these summaries have also been forwarded to the India Office, the Board of Trade (Commercial Intelligence Branch), His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, whose observations have been asked for on the subject, especially as regards paragraph 3 of Sir E. Lascelles' despatch No. 183, Commercial, of the 20th ultimo, relative to the alleged abortive negotiations between His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz and the Lurs.

Foreign Office, September 24, 1908.

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No. 567.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(September 26.)

(No. 586.)

Therapia, September 18, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in obedience to the instructions contained in your despatch No. 339 of the 24th ultimo, in conjunction with my Russian colleague, I addressed a note on the 7th instant to the Persian Ambassador forwarding to him copies of the papers desired by the Persian Government, namely:—

1. A draft communicated by the Sublime Porte to the Representatives of Great Britain and Russia at Constantinople to be presented for signature to the Persian Ambassador;

2. A collective note addressed by the Representatives of the two mediating Powers to the Sublime Porte on the 26th February (9th March), 1848; and

3. A confidential note addressed by the Representatives of the two Powers to Aali Pasha, the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs at that date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERARD LOWTHER.

[33334]

No. 568.

Messrs. Ellinger and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received September 26.)

Dear Mr. Mallet,

28, Oxford Street, Manchester, September 24, 1908.

YOUR letter of the 14th instant relative to the Concession held by the Mountajar of the Island of Ormuz has had my careful attention. There is no doubt that one of the reasons why the Mouin does not fall in with our views as to the most desirable method of conducting the business in oxide is because he fears that if he places his Ormuz Concession under British protection the Legation will be able to use its position to bring pressure to bear upon him in other matters if they see our British interests opposed to his own. Mr. Marling already made this clear in his despatch of the 24th March, in which he suggested that the best chance of bringing the Mouin to enter into the combination would be to be persuade him that he could count on the fullest measure of support of His Majesty's Government, and that His Majesty's Government would not and could not, in respect of other questions, make any improper use of his position of dependency on His Majesty's Government in which he would be placed as regards the Oxide Company.

We wrote you on the 30th June last that it appeared to us, in the then state of political affairs in Persia, that it was highly desirable in the interests of all concerned that Mr. Marling should be requested by cable to reassure the Mouin on this point, if he had not already done so, but to this letter we do not appear to have received any

* Nos. 355 and 422.

reply. I note that Mr. Marling thinks if our firm can disabuse the Mouin's mind of the suspicion under which he labours, then the chief difficulty in the matter would be removed, but it appears to me that if the Mouin really entertains this suspicion, and we believe he does, that His Majesty's Representative on the spot, and he alone, will be able to disabuse the Mouin's mind of the suspicion which he entertains. As far as we are concerned we have referred to the matter repeatedly in our correspondence, and we have told the Mouin, in the identical words used by Mr. Marling in the above-mentioned despatch, that His Majesty's Government would not and could not, in respect of other questions, make any improper use of the position of dependency in which he might be placed as regards the Oxide Company, and we further wrote to the Mouin on the 5th ultimo that His Majesty's Government had also satisfied us that any promise of protection made in respect of this business would not be used to bring pressure to bear upon him in other matters where his interests conflicted with those of other British subjects, notably with those of Messrs. Lynch. You can rely upon it, however, that we shall not neglect to avail ourselves of any suitable opportunity which may present itself in the future of again assuring the Mouin that His Majesty's Government have no such ulterior motive as he suspects, and we should of course in so doing carefully avoid giving him the impression that our action was in any way suggested or prompted by the Foreign Office.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

P.S.—We are just in receipt of an interesting communication of some length from the Mountajar, bearing on the question of the formation of the Company, and we will write you again in a few days.

M. E.

[33219]

No. 569.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 318.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 25, 1908.

MY telegram No. 305 of the 12th instant respecting the situation at Tabreez.

On threat of bombardment of the town the Governor-General gave the revolutionaries forty-eight hours in which to submit to his authority. This period expired on the 24th instant at sunrise, but it was not until late on that day that the bombardment commenced.

I doubt the success of the attempt, as the Shah's forces have no guns heavy enough to do much damage.

I have addressed a note to the Persian Government holding them responsible for any losses which British subjects may sustain.

[33336]

No. 570.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 319.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 26, 1908.

VICE-CONSUL at Tabreez reported yesterday in telegram No. 136 that the Royalists, with five guns in action, bombarded the Nationalist positions, all the Maku cavalry taking part in the attack. The Nationalists held their positions, and replied vigorously with four guns to Royalist fire.

[33350]

No. 571.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 27.)

(No. 320.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 27, 1908.

THE Shah and Constitution. My telegram No. 317 of the 24th instant.

I understand that some announcement regarding the elections was prepared and printed, but as it was considered too illiberal it was withdrawn, and no Proclamation has yet appeared.

[33421]

No. 572.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 233. Secret.)

Sir,

Gulahek, August 24, 1908.

SO far as my memory serves me, the copy of the French Minister's telegram to M. Pichon of the 29th June, which His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris transmitted to you in his despatch No. 262 of the 1st ultimo, is, with one omission, very nearly a transcript of the message the draft of which was read to me by M. Lecomte just before it was dispatched.

The passage omitted occurred towards the end of the last paragraph but one, and was to the following effect:—

"At present M. de Hartwig appears to forget that he is not yet the Viceroy of a Russian province, and that the language of the Asiatic Department is out of place in speaking with his English colleague. His tone in speaking to other people of Mr. Marling's resistance is that of a superior 'qui parle de la maniere d'un subordonné.'"

M. Lecomte may, of course, have suppressed this passage himself, but the mere fact that he should have put it on paper is strong testimony of the serious view he took of the attitude of the Russian Minister at the time of the *coup d'Etat*.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33422]

No. 573.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 236.)

Sir,

Gulahek, September 2, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 126 of the 21st May last, I have the honour to report that the question of the protection of Bahreinis in Persia has again been raised by a robbery committed near Yezd on a party of twenty-one Bahreini pilgrims returning from Meshed. I have informed the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs of the occurrence, and requested him to cause the necessary steps to be taken for the punishment of the robbers and the recovery of the money stolen, which amounted to 5,255 krans.

Meantime also, as it appeared to me to be impossible for us to allow the victims, who look to us for protection, to remain at the Vice-Consulate at Yezd in a destitute condition, I sent instructions to Mr. Blackman, through His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan, to furnish them with a sum sufficient to enable them to reach the nearest British Consulate on their way to their homes, which will, I presume, be Shiraz. The money so advanced will be recoverable from the Persian Government, but meantime I propose to request the Indian Government to allow it to be charged in the Legation accounts.

I am taking this opportunity to urge again the Persian Government to send instructions to the local Imperial authorities to accept the representations of His Majesty's Consular Representatives on behalf of the Bahreinis in Persia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33423]

No. 574.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 237.)

Sir,

Gulahek, September 1, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 223 of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul-General Wratishaw, reporting further on the relations between the Turkish and Persian Frontier Commissioners, and on the general situation in the districts adjoining Urumia.

Mr. Wratishaw believes that Tahir Pasha, in continuing to encroach on Persian

territory, was acting with the approval of his superiors, and some of his telegraphic reports of later date than the present despatch would seem to confirm that view. It appears to me, however, that Tahir Pasha had probably not then been convinced that the formal orders of the Sublime Porte might not still be over-ridden by the secret instructions from the Palace. His withdrawal from Urumia, reported in Mr. Wratishaw's telegram No. 53 of the 27th ultimo, may very well be a consequence of his having received unmistakable information of the altered condition of affairs at Constantinople, and that in order to save his face he has chosen to ascribe his departure to the impossibility of continuing negotiations with Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 574.

Consul-General Wratishaw to Mr. Marling.

(No. 12. Confidential.)

Sir,

Urumia, August 10, 1908.

SINCE the date of my despatch No. 11 of the 12th July, the Turkish and Persian Commissioners have exchanged a desultory correspondence arising out of the notes of which translations were inclosed in the above despatch. Apart from flat contradictions of one another's assertions and arguments, the following are the main points raised:—

1. With regard to the Porte's Memorandum to the Persian Embassy, referred to by Tahir, Muhteshem replies that this statement of opinion may be of weight from the Turkish point of view, but is certainly not binding on the Persian Commission. He adds gallantly that the Persian Government has replied to it, but, as a matter of fact, he is ignorant as to the tenor of the reply, or even whether the Memorandum has been answered at all.

2. In reply to Tahir's statement that in the Treaty of Murad 4 the frontier was fixed on the basis of difference of religion and nationality, Muhteshem declares that this is an entirely new departure, and that he knows of no Treaty which bears it out. The Kurds, he points out, are of Iranian origin, and still speak the ancient language of Persia, while there are Sunnis scattered all over the country, and not only in the frontier districts.

3. Both parties maintain their views regarding the interpretation of Article 3 of the Treaty of 1869.

4. A difference has arisen concerning the text of the Treaty of Erzeroum, 1238, which is expressly maintained by Article 9 of the Treaty of 1263. Tahir, quoting apparently from the Turkish "Collection of Treaties," which I have previously mentioned, asserts that by Article 1 of the Treaty of 1238 Persia bound herself not to "trespass on or interfere on any pretext with Kurdistan on the side of Bagdad, or with all the localities lying within the boundaries and the Sanjaks of Kurdistan." Muhteshem, on the other hand, follows the text of this Treaty as given by Hertlet, and interprets it to mean that "Persia is not to interfere with Bagdad nor Turkey with Kurdistan (Persian)"; and he further states that as there were some parts of Kurdistan then in Turkish occupation the Treaty added that "Persia shall under no pretext interfere with, or trespass on, any part of the Sanjak of Kurdistan within the boundaries."

Here the frontier negotiations remain for the moment until Muhteshem can receive instructions from his Government, which has been silent for the last seven weeks.

Meanwhile the Turks continue to advance with very small regard for appearances or Persian susceptibilities. In my telegram No. 46 of the 21st ultimo I reported the occupation by a company of Turkish infantry of the Sunni village of Kulunji, in Anzel, on the high road between Urumia and Tabreez through Salmas. Their officers stated that they had come by order of Yaver Pasha, who, indeed, sent a major from Mawana to guide them. They were accompanied by Ismail Agha, recently appointed by the Turks Chief of the Shekoik tribe, and Omer Agha, another leading Shekoik. Ismail Agha at once addressed a letter to the Anzel villages of Jemalabad, Kutchi, and Barakh, which was also signed by Mehmet-ibn-Taher, the Col Aghassi commanding the Turkish soldiers, ordering them to turn out their Mubashirs (landlords'

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agents) and to refrain from threshing their wheat or taking it away from the threshing-floors until it had been inspected by Ottoman officials, presumably with a view to levying tithe. The Col Aghassi signed himself "Commandant of Anzel," and Ismail Agha, "Functionary of the Ottoman Government for Baradost, Anzel, and Charik."

Muhteshem at once addressed energetic remonstrances to Tahir, who solemnly declared that he had no knowledge of this advance, and did not approve of it, the truth being, I believe, that he had arranged it with Yaver Pasha, but for a later date, and that he was really displeased with Yaver for his premature action. At any rate the soldiers were withdrawn from Kulunji on the 22nd, but only to a village a few miles distant, and just within the borders of Somai. Omer Agha, however, with a few Kurds, has remained in Anzel till now, and forbids the removal of the grain from the threshing-floors. The near proximity of the Turkish troops prevents any one resisting him, and though not actually within Anzel they practically dominate the district.

On the 6th instant Tervik Bey, a member of the Turkish Commission, called on Muhteshem on behalf of Tahir, and proposed that he should consent to the occupation of all the villages of Anzel by Turkish troops in order to put a stop to the shocking persecutions of Sunnis which were alleged to go on there. Muhteshem emphatically declined the obliging offer. Nothing is known here of the persecutions referred to, which are manifestly out of the question under present conditions.

At the beginning of last week news was brought here that Herkai Kurds had crossed from Mergavar into the western end of the Baranduz district, and at Muhteshem's request Tahir sent his Aide-de-camp, Kazim Bey, along with an officer of Persian Cossacks, to order them back to Mergavar. On reaching the locality, not only was the number of Kurds there found to be largely increased, but a company of Turkish soldiers, about sixty men with two officers, were discovered installed at the small village of Jafferian. They declared that they had been sent to occupy the district by Yaver Pasha under instructions from Tahir, which Tahir subsequently admitted to be true. Not only did Kazim not order them back, but he produced an extract from Dervish Pasha's report, supplied him by Tahir, which lays down the Turkish frontier in that direction and includes a good half of the Baranduz valley within it. This incident gives a fair idea of the duplicity shown on all occasions by Tahir Pasha.

Since then, Yaver Pasha has himself arrived in Baranduz with another company of soldiers and Kerim Khan, the Herkai Chief, who has been appointed Mudir there. They have ordered the peasants to cease paying taxes to the Shah.

In the course of conversation to-day Tahir told me that he had sent the troops to Baranduz "to maintain order" in compliance with Muhteshem's written request contained in a certain letter addressed to him two months ago. This is quite untrue, as the letter in question merely contained a request that Tahir would take steps to prevent the incursions of Kurds into Persian territory. Tahir also informed me that the western portion of Baranduz and the whole of Anzel were undoubtedly Turkish. He has to-day written in the same sense to Muhteshem, adding that he has a perfect right to send troops into all the "districts in dispute."

On the 7th instant I received a visit from M. Logothetidi, a Turkish Public Debt Inspector, who had just arrived in Urumia. He informed me confidentially that he had been ordered here to make arrangements for organizing a Salt Administration on the shore of the lake in Anzel, should that district be already occupied by the Turks. If not, he was to arrange for a supply of salt for the Vilayet of Van. He also told me that Tahir had advised him to wait a few days and rest himself after his journey before taking any steps.

In calling subsequently on Muhteshem he only mentioned the latter half of his mission, and asked Muhteshem to furnish him with an escort, so that he might visit Anzel. Muhteshem declined to do so, telling him that he could make his arrangements for buying salt directly with the landlords here, and that there was nothing to be gained by going to the spot. M. Logothetidi, however, started yesterday for Anzel, accompanied, I believe, by some Turkish Zaptiehs.

It certainly looks as if Anzel were about to go the same way as the other districts on which the Turks have cast covetous eyes, and I am quite unable to explain the amazing discrepancy between the assurances given by the Porte to His Majesty's Embassy and the action of its Representatives here. My experience of Tahir, however, forbids me to believe that he would, on his own responsibility, take serious steps unless he was pretty sure that they would be approved by his official superiors.

The telegraph line between Tabreez and Urumia has not worked for more than a month. The last communication which I received on the subject of the frontier question is Mr. Barclay's telegram of the 14th July, forwarded to me by post from Tabreez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

[33425]

No. 575.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 239.)

Sir,

Gulahak, September 3, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Imperial Mint has been recently farmed out to a certain Hajji Ismail Agha for the sum of 150,000 tomans. This individual has been twice convicted of late of uttering false coin. The French Financial Adviser upon learning this warned the Minister of Finance that not a fortnight would elapse before he received a protest from one or other of the banks.

His anticipations were correct, as may be judged from the letter addressed by the Chief Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia to Kawam-ed-Dowleh, copy of which is inclosed.

I may add that a very considerable quantity of spurious coin is now in circulation in Tehran, and, inasmuch as the die with which it is struck is one that was in use some years ago, there seems some reason to think that this illicit coining is carried on at the mint itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 575.

Imperial Bank of Persia to Kawam-ed-Dowleh.

Your Excellency,

August 27, 1908.

WE think it desirable that your attention should be called to what threatens to become a grave danger to public interest, if not to the State.

Spurious currency, purporting to be coin of the realm, has been put into circulation in Tehran, and the bank is daily obliged to reject such money tendered by the public.

We have gone to the expense of effecting an assay, and find, out of two tests made, that the coins contain only 50 per cent. of silver.

We beg that your Excellency will kindly take such steps as are considered necessary, not only for our own protection but also for that of the public with whom we deal.

We beg, &c.

[33428]

No. 576.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 242.)

Sir,

Gulahak, September 5, 1908.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 294 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of the note I addressed to the Persian Government warning them against any attempt to obtain a pecuniary advance secured on the Hormuz Oxide Concession.

Having in mind the instructions contained in your telegram No. 181 of the 20th July, as regards the extreme undesirability of this Concession falling into German hands, I thought it well to make it perfectly plain to the Persian Government that the alienation of the Hormuz Concession to a third party would be most distasteful to His Majesty's Government, and trust that in making the inclosed communication I have correctly interpreted your wishes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 576.

Mr. Marling to Ala-es-Sultaneh.

Your Highness,

Gulahek, September 4, 1908.

It has come to my knowledge that the Persian Government contemplate obtaining a pecuniary advance to be secured by a Concession of the oxide mines in the Island of Hormuz.

In these circumstances, it is my duty to remind your Highness of the conditions, communicated to your Highness in Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's note of the 31st August, 1907, on which His Britannic Majesty's Government agreed to the request of the Imperial Government for the suspension for three years of the sinking fund of the English loan of 1903-1904, one of which was the very natural and moderate stipulation that "in accordance with the general law as to debtors and creditors, it is understood that the Persian Government on its side will not contract any new foreign loan without first giving their creditors, England and Russia, the option of advancing money on the same conditions."

No objection having been raised by the Persian Government to these conditions, His Britannic Majesty's Government consider them, as I had the honour to inform your Highness in my note of the 25th July last, as definitely and irrevocably accepted, and it is my duty to point out to your Highness that in these circumstances the Persian Government is precluded from raising any loan or advance whatever without first giving to His Majesty's Government the option of making that loan or advance on equal terms.

I have, therefore, the honour to request your Highness to be so good as to inform me of any negotiations which may take place, either now or in the future, with the object of obtaining a pecuniary advance or loan, in order that I may submit the conditions to my Government in case they should wish to avail themselves of the conditions above mentioned.

In this connection it is, I think, not inopportune that I should also remind your Highness that the interest on the English Loan of 1903-1904, which was due on the 4th April last has not been paid, and that so long as this obligation remains unfulfilled any attempt of the Persian Government to pledge the resources of the country for any other purpose is an act against which it would be my duty to make energetic protest.

I shall be very glad if your Highness will be so good as to take the earliest opportunity of submitting the present communication to the consideration of His Imperial Majesty the Shah.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33429]

No. 577.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 243.)

Sir,

Gulahek, September 5, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 237 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note which I have received from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, informing me of the encroachments of the Turkish troops both north and south of Urumia, so that that town was cut off from communication, except across the lake, with the rest of Persia, and requesting that action may be taken by His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, in concert with his Persian colleague, to put an end to this aggression.

The encroachments mentioned by Ala-es-Sultaneh in this note were reported by Mr. Consul-General Wratislav in his telegram No. 49 of the 11th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 577.

*Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.**September 1, 1908.*

(Translation.)

ACCORDING to the written information received yesterday from Urumia, 125 Turkish troops have entered the district of Anzel, in Persia proper, on the Tabreez road, and sent written orders to the villages in that district. The orders bear the signature of Ismail Agha, of Shekkak, who has been summoned from Chebrik. A Ghulaghasi has established himself at the village of Balghu, less than a farsakh from the road, and supports the rebellious Kurds who are collecting the harvest in the villages of Anzel. On the other hand, 100 soldiers have been sent to the district of Baranduzehie, in Persian territory. Yaver Pasha, General of Division, has come to the same place; he has brought Karim Khan-i-Haraki with him, and they have taken possession of and have let out the villages in the district. They have, in fact, besieged Urumia, i.e., they have taken possession of the district of Baranduz, on the one side, as far as the lake, and on the other side they have seized the district of the Upper and Lower Anzel as far as the lake. They have also brought an inspector to inspect the salt of the lake, so that they may make some arrangements about that article. They have also decided to take possession of other villages by degrees, so as to stop the roads to the lake. On the Salmas side also Chebrik has been encroached upon by the Turks, and Kohneh Shahre is also suffering from their oppression. On the Khoi side they have sent troops to Baland. According to the information received from the Kurdistan local authorities, the Turkish intruders are constructing buildings at Baneh, and have collected revenue by force. Although the Mohtashem-es-Sultaneh has often asked the Turkish Commissioner, verbally and by writing, for the recall of the Turkish troops and the prevention of the unwarranted proceedings on the part of the Turks, no result has been achieved, except delay, frivolous remonstrances, the violation of the clear rights of the Persian Government, and renewed encroachment.

Under these circumstances, I have considered it necessary to inform you of the high-handed action of the Turkish frontier authorities on territory indisputably that of the Persian Government.

I therefore request you to be good enough to bring the matter to the notice of the British Government, so that the British Ambassador at Constantinople may be instructed to co-operate with the Persian Representative in taking measures to prevent the evils.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED ALI.

[33430]

No. 578.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 244.)

Sir,

Gulahek, September 5, 1908.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 95 of the 9th May last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note which I have received from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs in reply to constant representations I have made for satisfaction for the assault committed in June last year, near Lat-i-Baring, on some members of the escort of His Majesty's Consul at Seistan by some retainers of Pasand Khan, who at that time held a contract with the Persian Customs for the safe conveyance of the mails. It cannot be pretended that this note is a satisfactory compliance with our demands for satisfaction for the incident. We required that the contract with the Khan should at once be terminated, and that neither he nor his men should again be taken into the service of the Persian Government. The Persian Government, however, only informs me that the Postal Administration has been instructed to dismiss the dependents of the Khan who committed the offence, and not to employ them again, and that the authorities have been instructed not to renew the contract with Pasand Khan, which has been cancelled. Unsatisfactory as it is, I venture to think that we should accept the note and allow the question to drop. It has been dragging on for rather more than a year, in spite of the constant and urgent efforts that I have made, and in spite, moreover, of the fact that for the last few weeks M. Molitor, the Head of the Postal Administration, has been urging the Minister for Foreign Affairs to give us the satisfaction we demand. The time and trouble necessary to obtain a complete com-

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pliance with our requirements would, I submit, be out of all proportion to the result to be obtained; and, with the many far more important questions that are now demanding the attention of the Legation, it is extremely desirable to keep the list of current affairs of minor importance as small as possible. It appears to me also very improbable that a similar case of this kind will recur, seeing that the assault on the escort was committed under the impression that an insult to us would be gratifying to the Russian local officials.

In reporting by telegraph the receipt of this note to the Government of India I have suggested that, should the Viceroy concur in my view that the case may be dropped, I may be authorized to intimate to the Persian Postal Administration that the Indian Government are now prepared to instruct the British Indian Postal Officer in the Persian Gulf to conform with Postal Union Rules as to the acceptance and forwarding of Persian mail matter, a point on which the Government of India was disinclined to give way pending the settlement of the Pasand Khan incident.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 578.

Ala-es-Sultaneh to Mr. Marling.

(Translation.)

[Undated.]

IN reply to your note of the 29th July and previous correspondence addressed by the British Legation on the subject of the misbehaviour of some of Pasand Khan's horsemen towards Indian sowars, which took place last year at Lat-i-Baring, I beg to state that the Foreign Office regrets this incident very much, and, in order to give satisfaction to the British Legation, the necessary orders have been addressed to the Postal Administration to dismiss the dependents of Pasand Khan who had committed this offence, and not to employ them in future in that district. Besides this, Pasand Khan's contract for carrying the post between Seistan and Birjand has been cancelled, and the authorities have been specially instructed not to renew it. I have informed you of the satisfactory measures taken by the Persian Government in this matter.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED ALI.

[33432]

No. 579.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 216.)

Gulahak, September 8, 1908.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 214 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum prepared by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, in which he discusses at length the question of the opening up of communications between Dizful and Western and Northern Persia.

After examining the merits and demerits of the various routes leading across Luristan from Dizful to Khorremabad and the possible means of protecting caravan traffic from the depredations of the tribes inhabiting those districts, Captain Lorimer urges that some steps should be taken to prevent the lapse of the Persian Transport Company's Concession, and suggests that for this purpose the Persian Government should be reminded of its obligations to maintain such reasonable degree of security in the districts concerned as to make it possible for the concessionnaires to construct and work the road, and that these representations should be followed up by the announcement that at a fixed date a survey party will be dispatched to Luristan, for the safety of which the Persian Government will be held responsible.

The question as to whether any action to maintain the Luristan Road Concession is desirable obviously hangs on the issue of the *pourparlers* that have recently been exchanged between London and St. Petersburg for the construction of a railway between Jaffa and Mohammedrah. Should those *pourparlers* result in an agreement binding the two Powers to the construction of a railway running from north to south approximately parallel to the western frontier of Persia, and serving also the capital, within the immediate future, there would, I conceive, be no necessity or justification for taking the extreme measures proposed by Captain Lorimer in order to make our position

secure for the exploitation of the Persian Transport Company's Concession. But if, on the other hand, the acquisition of the Railway Concession is intended merely as a paper barrier against an extension of German railways from Bagdad, or should it seem probable that, for financial or other reasons, the construction of the railroad may be deferred until after the Road Concession would have elapsed, I venture to express the opinion that as a matter of precaution some action should be taken to secure the object Captain Lorimer has in view.

But before taking any decision I presume that His Majesty's Government would take into consideration the manner in which such action would be viewed by the Russian Government. And in the light of the reply given by M. Isvolsky with reference to the proposed participation of Messrs. Stevens in the Imam Kuli Mirza's Navigation Concession for Lake Urumia, and still more in the light of the Russian Memorandum of the 2nd (13th) August in regard to railway construction in Persia, there is no room to doubt but that that attitude would be one of remonstrance, on the ground that any action on our part tending to facilitate our commercial access to the Russian "sphere" is contrary to the spirit of the Convention of the 31st August, 1907. The Convention, however, specially provides for the maintenance of existing Concessions, and it appears to me to be perfectly arguable that any action which His Majesty's Government may think proper to take in order to prevent the lapse of the Concession is directed only towards the maintenance of an existing Concession.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 579.

Memorandum by Vice-Consul Lorimer on the Opening up of Communications between Dizful and Western and Northern Persia.

IT has recently been suggested by His Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf that Captain Haworth, His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah, and myself should avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded by our meeting at Tehran to talk over and draw up a joint Report on the general question of opening up communications through Luristan.

In compliance with this suggestion we have discussed the question together. As, however, Captain Haworth has already drawn up a fresh Report, in continuation of that which he submitted last October on the same subject, and as there is considerable practical difficulty in fully co-ordinating our views, originating as they do from standpoints of diverse experience, we have concluded that it would be more convenient that Captain Haworth should submit the Report which he has prepared, and that I should add as an addendum any additional considerations which I judge of sufficient importance, and call attention to any points in which I may happen to differ in opinion from him.

Owing to fresh information which has come to his knowledge, Captain Haworth's ideas have undergone some alteration since he submitted his original proposals regarding a Dizful-Kermanshah route, and this is a direction which nullifies many of the criticisms of that scheme which I put forward. In what follows I shall not refer to such matters, and further I will assume that his present Report, embodying his latest views, has been read before this Memorandum is taken up.

2. The general question resolves itself into two main divisions, that of:—

- (1.) The means of communication which will be available for connecting the head of the Persian Gulf with the trade centres of middle Western Persia.
- (2.) The route which it is most advisable to adopt.

In regard to the first point, there is a conceivable choice of animal transport and a railway-line.

In regard to the second, it is sufficient before going into detail to remark that it is probable that the most suitable alignment for a railway would be found to be up the valley of the Karkha (here known as the Saimarra) River, from where it escapes round the east end of the Kabir Kuh range to the point where it is joined by the Kashgan River, the course of the latter river being then followed up until an easy entry into the Kharramabad Valley were struck.

3. Proceeding now to examine the question of routes available, from a more

general point of view, it is unnecessary here to deal with the section from Mohammerah to Ahwaz, which could be served by a railway up the right bank of the Karun, or by the river steam-boat service at present in existence.

Onwards from Ahwaz there can be no question that the shortest and most suitable alignment would be direct from Ahwaz to some point to the west of Dizful, running up the strip of land bounded lengthwise by the Diz and Karkha Rivers. For fuller information regarding this section, reference is invited to the Memorandum forwarded under my despatch No. 27 T, dated the 28th July, 1908, addressed to His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran.

The route via Shushter is not, however, open to fatal objection so long as the requirements of pack transport alone have to be considered.

4. The real question of route only arises the moment that Dizful is left behind, with Hamadan, the trade centre to be aimed at, as objective.

Leaving out on the east a rumoured track, of whose existence I have failed to obtain any satisfactory corroboration, investigation has revealed three main potential lines of communication between Dizful and Khurramabad, which latter, with Burujird three stages further on, lies approximately on a straight line connecting Dizful and Hamadan. Both Khurramabad and Burujird are trade centres of some consideration. The routes just referred to are—

- (1.) The "direct" route, over the Kialan Pass.
- (2.) The "artillery" route, mentioned above in connection with the question of a railway alignment.
- (3.) The Saimarra route, crossing the Kabir Kuh and Karkha River at the locality of that name.

No. 1 is some seven stages long, was worked formerly as a caravan road by previous Governors of Luristan, and still in places boasts the remains of caravanserais. It lies across the Dirakwand country, which has now for a number of years been closed to public traffic.

No. 2 also lies through part of the Dirakwand country, and further trenches on lands under the control of the Dillan tribes, and of others, such as the Hassanwand.

It is stated that Persian artillery has in former times been repeatedly sent down to Arabistan by this route.

No. 3 crosses the Karkha west of Dizful, proceeds through Pasht-i-Kuh territory along the southern skirt of the Kabir Kuh, which it crosses eventually some five stages from Dizful.

It then immediately recrosses the Karkha (Saimarra) River, after which the country is comparatively easy, and a choice of routes to Khurramabad can be found.

This route, the use of which I have previously suggested as a temporary measure, pending the development of the Persian Transport Company's Concession, is some four stages longer than No. 1, and presents no advantages as an alignment for a permanent road.

All these routes lie across Luristan.

5. We now come to a fourth route—that recommended by Captain Haworth in his original proposals.

This route, after crossing the Karkha west of Dizful, would lie entirely in what is Pasht-i-Kuh territory, or effectively such, until the boundary of the Kermanshah Province were attained. Kermanshah itself would be the primary objective.

This route, which seems to offer several advantages, suffers from the defect of length, and could not compete with route No. 1, were that subsequently thrown open.

This subject is fully dealt with by Captain Haworth, who now only regards the employment of this route as a possible *pis aller*—a view which I entirely indorse, on the grounds put forward by him.

Before passing on, I will only take occasion to remark that this route, though throughout the major part of its course there is every reason to believe that adequate protection could be arranged for through the agency of the Wali, yet presents in its first one or two stages from Dizful the same difficulty in providing for its security as the Luristan routes which I now proceed to deal with.

6. Of these three routes, the third has already been put out of court, and our attention may be restricted to the remaining two. The second of these, being longer and offering no advantages in comparison, is only retained for discussion on account of its presumptive suitability for a railway alignment.

From a local point of view, the construction of a road in circumstances such as

obtain at present in Luristan presents problems which fall into two categories—the one physical, the other political.

In the case of the two routes now under consideration, the problems encountered in the first category are so trifling that they do not at this stage call for detailed examination.

For the purposes of pack traffic only a passable track is demanded, and this already exists, to my certain knowledge, in the case of No. 1. The track would no doubt be susceptible of improvement, and new caravanserais would have to be built, or the remains of previously existing ones, which are in evidence along the route, would have to be restored. The only question which would have to be determined would be the exact amount of improvement and construction which would be advisable.

The necessity of constructing a carriageable road would not, I understand, be insisted on in the first instance by the Persian Government.

7. The problems to be envisaged under the second category are of a much more serious character. They may be considered as all emanating from one source, the necessity of rendering the route secure involving, in the first place, the coercion or enjolling of the local tribes into removing the embargo which they have for a number of years imposed on the passage of caravans through their country. As matters stand, there is no mere question of exposing caravans to a risk of being plundered; it is absolutely impossible to dispatch caravans at all, granted even all the complacency in the world in regard to the payment of blackmail.

8. The question of the protection of the route as far as Shush (Susa) has been reviewed in the Memorandum mentioned above, and in the covering letter of the same (my No. 26 T (a), dated the 24th July, 1908).

From Shush onwards the problem presents itself in three phases, corresponding to—

(1.) The section of the route from Shush to where Luristan is entered, which crosses a "no man's land," in which the dominant element is usually the Sagwand, things being further complicated by the vicinity of Arabs resident in Persian territory, and others hailing from beyond the Turkish frontier. This tract is also partially exposed to the activities of raiding parties of the Dirakwand;

(2.) The section from the southern border of Luristan to Khurramabad which lies athwart the middle of the Dirakwand country, and latterly through territory subject to their influence;

(3.) The section, three stages in length, from Khurramabad to Burujird, the first part of which is at certain seasons dangerous owing to the presence of the strong and criminally disposed tribe of the Bairanwand, who cross it twice in their annual migrations.

9. The first section, in the absence of a strong Representative of the Persian Government in Arabistan, presents a very difficult problem owing to the fact that there are many tribes involved, all of whose interests are at variance, and the strongest of whom, the Sagwand, do not always remain throughout the hot weather, and are divided up between a number of contending Chiefs, none of whom enjoy any effective paramountcy.

With a strong Governor this tract is occasionally reduced to a comparative degree of order, always excepting the incursions of irrepressible Dirakwand.

It is conceivable that, under pressure, and at some expense on our part, traffic over this section might be rendered secure; and the same remark holds good in regard to the third section, which even boasts two settled communities in the first and dangerous half of its course, which might be turned to some account as *points d'appui*.

By far the most grave difficulty is met with in the case of the second section. The character and method of the Dirakwand have been illustrated in their attack on Colonel Douglas and myself when under their safe conduct in 1904, and has been sufficiently dealt with in previous correspondence. Here it is enough to say that their strongly democratic tendencies, which have precluded the domination of any Chief, or even section, and their highly developed predatory habits, make the problem of dealing with them in the absence of force excessively difficult, if not insoluble.

10. Before pursuing this subject further it will be convenient to disembarass ourselves of the necessity of again reverting to the second, or railway, route, by mentioning that it would similarly necessitate a complete settlement of the Dirakwand question, and at the same time an accommodation with the Dillan and probably other tribes.

11. Returning again to the consideration of the Dirakwand difficulty, its solution without the employment of force is so problematical as to oblige us to examine, in the

first place, what means we have at hand, if any, of bringing force to bear on that recalcitrant democracy, or failing force, any even of those spurious substitutes for force which sometimes pass current in Persia.

Possible means which occur to my mind are:—

(1.) Pressure on the Persian Government to force it to exercise its functions as the supreme authority in the country, either directly through its own local Representatives and regular forces, or indirectly by invoking external assistance.

(2.) The invoking and control by ourselves of other local powers by means of—

(a.) A combination of other Lur tribes;

(b.) The agency of any single powerful Lur Chief, of whom there is perhaps only one worthy of consideration—the Fath-us-Sultan of the Dilfan.

(3.) The invoking by us of external aid—

(a.) In the person of the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh;

(b.) Of the Bakhtiari Khans.

In the case of (2) and (3) the friendly consent of the Persian Government would almost certainly be necessary, as only on this condition is it probable that the Powers appealed to by us would be prepared to act.

12. To glance at these alternatives:—

The first is probably always within the range of possibilities. Strong Governors at Dizful and Khurramabad with some troops and full moral and financial support by the Persian Government could probably effect what is required, but in existing circumstances it seems impossible to compel the Persian Government to incur the necessary expenditure, granted even its ability to do so. The only way in which I can imagine of bringing it within the scope of practical politics would be to make it a carefully guarded condition of a loan granted to the Persian Government. The probability or otherwise of a loan being negotiated in the near future, and the feasibility of attaching any such condition to it, are matters which do not lie within my purview.

The suggestions made under the second alternative would be expensive, and could only be justified on ground of necessity, or if it were considered a matter of prime political importance to secure a practical control over this region. This, I believe, it would secure to us.

It is questionable whether—

(a.) Would be possible; and

(b.) Would probably be easier to carry into effect, and less difficult to maintain.

The third alternative would entail the same difficulties as the last, but in a lesser degree. I would not, however, recommend extending the responsibilities of the Bakhtiari, for various reasons which will readily suggest themselves to the mind.

The case of the Wali is different, and the consolidation of a strong power under our control in the dominating position occupied by Pusht-i-Kuh and Western Luristan would create an asset of great political and strategic value.

It is, however, open to question whether the Persian Government would willingly consent to such a radical alteration in the *status quo* in South-Western Persia, more especially if it were to be carried out under our auspices. There is also the question of the Wali's ability to undertake the practical administration of Luristan. Were he strong enough to do so unaided he would unquestionably at the present moment be in possession of what was once under the dominion of his ancestors. Would the financial backing and moral support which would accrue to him from an alliance with us render him sufficiently strong to override the open or concealed hostility of all the tribes of Luristan which he would undoubtedly have to face? The answer to this question would probably depend on the secret, as distinguished from the apparent, attitude of the Persian Government towards him after it had given its overt consent to the arrangement.

13. We have now concluded our review on the general situation, and if it appears to have been dealt with at undue length it yet remains a fact that this complicated subject has only been treated in merest outline.

It now falls to consider what courses of action are open to us, assuming that it were decided to turn to practical account our Concession rights.

Captain Haworth is sanguine that, by pursuing a consistent policy of worrying both the local authorities and the Persian Government, a way will eventually open up before

us, and he makes no further very definite suggestions regarding this phase of the question, which to me appears to be the alpha and omega of the whole problem. He, however, proposes that he should be allowed to go to Khurramabad in order to examine the state of affairs at closer quarters, and I would venture to express my opinion that this is very desirable.

My own experience, which I recognize as being that of only one individual, makes it difficult for me to believe that in such a matter representations to the local authorities will be of the smallest efficacy until definite orders have been issued by the Central Government and practical steps initiated by it.

With the best will in the world they would in any other circumstances be afraid to act, and, indeed, would be as powerless to grapple with the Luristan situation as we.

In the south, indeed, for more than a year there has been no authority who would acknowledge any responsibility in regard to the state of North-West Arabistan, and the Sardar Mukarram, a strong and capable Governor, has shown himself quite unequal to the task of opening up a route through Luristan, an object which I believe he really had close at heart.

Local effort, in my opinion, would only be effective in forcing local authorities to carry out orders issued by the Central Government and in dealing with the tribes. As regards the latter form of activity, I believe that at the present moment there would be the greatest practical difficulty in getting into touch with the Dirakwand.

It will be clear therefore that in my view any effective scheme of action must originate in Tehran, and on the possibility of inducing or compelling the Persian Government to take the necessary steps it is not within my competence to pronounce.

Of this, however, I am sure, that it will require a high degree of earnestness and insistence on the part of His Majesty's Government to secure effective compliance with its requirements, and that the question of finance, to which I have already alluded, will, unless removed, prove a very real impediment.

14. If urged to express an opinion as to what choice of action is open to us, I can only proffer the following tentative suggestion:—

I would suggest, in the first place, that we should in any case without delay make strong representations to the Persian Government regarding its obligations in relation to the Concession which it has granted for a road through Luristan, pointing out that the Concession has now only some three or four years to run, and that at no time in the past has it been made possible for us to work it. This representation, if the situation does not develop, should be renewed annually with the express intention of putting ourselves in a position to eventually prefer a demand for an extension of the period, or for compensation for the loss of the Concession.

If His Majesty's Government is fully decided to insist on obtaining the fruits of the Concession, this representation, made at as early an opportunity as possible, should be followed up by an announcement that, whatever attitude the Persian Government choose to adopt, we intend to accept no further delay, and that on a fixed date a survey party will be dispatched to Luristan, and that the Persian Government will be held responsible for its safety; and this announcement should be carried into effect at least to the point of putting down a survey party at Dizful.

Were the financial difficulty overcome, I believe that the Persian Government would, if it detected no signs of vacillation on our part, do everything in its power to satisfy our wants.

It will be objected to that this is a very extreme measure, but I am personally without hope that any less decided action will rouse the Persian Government from the oblivion to our just claims in which it is plunged.

It may also be objected that a survey party would entail considerable expense, and that no clear necessity exists for its employment where it is only proposed to improve an existing track across comparatively easy country. But the question may first be asked whether a much more extensive use of its services could not be made. In view of the apparently not remote possibility of the construction of a railway across Luristan, the advantage of having an alignment already fixed on and surveyed is obvious, and this the party could secure without awakening the Persians' suspicions as to our ultimate designs, by ostensibly seeking for and surveying an alignment suitable for wheeled traffic.

The direct and other routes could also be examined; and it is not improbable that useful work could be found for the party in connection with the interests of the Oil Syndicate.

It might even conceivably be possible to arrange for beginning operations on the upper half of the probable railway alignment before the Persian Government had moved in our interests, and that without incurring any undue risk. But this is not certain.

The party once in the country and our determination beyond question, I do not think, as I have already said, that the Persian Government would venture to shirk its responsibilities, and I think it would make every effort in its power to produce a working solution of the Luristan question.

15. The responsibility incurred by any one making or accepting such as the above, which if pushed to finality in unfavourable circumstances would savour of audacity, is, I am well aware, considerable, but the question remains what alternative to a forcing policy exists, or what less objectionable form of the latter can be devised.

I can offer no suggestion as regards the second point, and as regards the first I only see the alternative of attempting to enter into relations with the tribes and so carry the matter through by direct negotiation. This seems to me scarcely practicable. To get into touch with the Dirakwand is, as I have stated earlier, a problem in itself; and the state of internal division of all the tribes concerned, and their want of good where it is not guaranteed by the possession of superior force by the other party to the negotiation, combine to render any attempt in this direction of very doubtful possibility or expediency.

The situation has been altered considerably since I submitted my first proposals in 1904, both by the behaviour of the Dirakwand towards ourselves and the loss of a strong personality and a valuable friend in Khanjan Khan, Sagwand.

I did, however, hear this year, on dubious authority, that the Dirakwand had thoroughly repented of their action in 1904, and were so anxious to get into our good graces as to be prepared to welcome a renewal of the question of the road. The main object would, of course, be to interpose a buffer between themselves and the Persian Government, and this might produce an artificial improvement in their manners. Even were this the case however, the difficulty of obtaining any guarantee of their good faith or any assurance of the stability of an agreement with them would still remain.

16. Of course, if the Persian Government accede to our preliminary representations to the extent of at once taking the matter in hand itself, or of according its strongest support to the employment by us of some outside agency (always granted our readiness to pay the bill), forceful measures on our part will not be necessary.

At the same time we should always have to be prepared to take steps to keep it up to the faithful performance of its promises, and in practice this would only bring us round, after the lapse of an indefinite period of time, to the point at which the exercise of pressure becomes necessary.

There is one presumptive solution on which there is always great temptation to fall back, that represented by the word *time*. Reliance on this means of salvation implies a more or less implicit belief that within a calculable period the state of affairs will undergo some material change for the better.

In the present case I see no grounds for indulging in this belief. The Kajars have for years failed to assert their authority in Luristan, and the now defunct Medjliss impaired the surviving authority of the Shah and his Representatives without showing any ability to establish its own.

Time, in my opinion, promises no solution, and only favours the chance of the incursion of European rivals.

17. Indications have recently been given that the question of a railway through this part of Persia may shortly enter into the sphere of practical politics, and no study of the question of communications which ignores this possibility would now be complete. Were the possibility a certainty, and the time necessary to give it effect inconsiderable, it would be unnecessary to consider the question of caravan roads or tracks at all. Such, however, is not the case, and at the best we may reckon on a period of several years elapsing before a railway could possibly be built and ready to perform its functions.

On these premises it may be asked whether the trouble and expense involved in pacifying the country and furnishing the minimum of facilities necessary for pack traffic would be justifiable.

Captain Haworth has touched on this point in his Report, and I am in general accord with the views which he expresses.

To throw open a route through Luristan, preferably that I have described as the direct route, would entail a settlement of by far the most pressing political difficulties which would beset the carrying out of a railway scheme, and this would gain us both time and experience.

The only question is whether it would be fair to ask the Persian Transport Company to sink capital on a road which was destined to become obsolete in a few years, and this depends on exactly what amount of expenditure would have to be incurred.

In my opinion, it would not have to be great, being confined to the execution of minor improvements of the track and the repair of the old caravanserais or the construction of new ones of the most unpretentious description to replace them.

Of course, the protection of the route would have to be paid for, but this is a recurring and, as it were, working expense, and not an initial charge, and, whether it were paid for five years or for fifty, would always have to be taken into account in assessing the character of a road as a profitable or unprofitable undertaking.

There is no use blinking the fact that the working of any scheme, whether a railway or a road one, will necessitate a large expenditure, the most serious part of which, in the case of a road, will be precisely these recurring charges for protection.

Admitting this, it must yet be remembered that on the other side of the account must be entered the menaces to our commercial and political position which it is designed to oppose.

18. The importance of our large and growing trade in the west and north-west of Persia has been placed in a very clear light by Captain Haworth. But, though for the moment the position is satisfactory, this trade really lies at the mercy of Russia until we are able to convey our merchandize to the trade centres by a less circuitous and tedious route than that via Bagdad; and even Germany can any day enter the lists on equal terms with ourselves.

Still more dangerous would appear to be the danger threatening us from the Bagdad Railway, which appears to be slowly but steadily advancing to completion, and in the known ambitions of the Germans to establish a commercial supremacy in Western Persia, or in Persia generally, by an extension of the Bagdad Railway via Khanaqin and Kermanshah to Tehran.

These matters, I am aware, lie outside my legitimate cognizance, and my information regarding them is neither full nor exact, but I may perhaps be pardoned if I call attention to how completely a railway—and probably, though in a lesser degree, even a road connecting Mohammerah with, say, Hamadan—would act as a bar to the realization of these German ambitions.

These considerations, from my limited point of view, seem to justify measures on our part, whether political or financial, on a scale which would avail to carry us to the attainment of any schemes we are likely to entertain in regard to Luristan.

The immediate effect of such an assumption is to relegate any scheme for an indirect route, such as one via Kermanshah, to the remote background, except in so far as it might be possible to utilize this route or that via Saimarra (as formerly proposed by myself) as a temporary means of communication with a minimum sinking of capital. This could only become advisable if there were the prospect of a long delay in obtaining our real and final object.

19. With this proviso I offer the following few remarks with reference to one or two points regarding the Kermanshah route, on which I incline to differ from Captain Haworth as he expresses himself in his latest letter.

Captain Haworth gives as a purely tentative estimate of the probable cost of protecting this route the sum of 1,000*l.* per annum. Speaking in a similarly tentative way, I would be inclined to place the estimate much higher if effective protection were to be secured and the payment of compensation for losses occurring through robbery.

With regard to the opinions of Major Burton and Mr. Preece which are quoted, I am in a position to affirm that the first was the result of a misunderstanding on Major Burton's part, and does not at all correctly represent the late Khanjan's views; while Mr. Preece's opinion, however true it was at the time it was written, does not hold good in the state of affairs existing at the present day.

The question of Consulate boundaries I have dealt with in a separate note.

Other points suggested by Captain Haworth's Report have incidentally been discussed in earlier sections of the present Memorandum.

I do not refer to matters relating to his own district, of which Captain Haworth has made a special study, and on which his opinion is entitled to be considered authoritative.

(Signed)

D. L. R. LORIMER, *Captain, Indian Army, His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul for Arabistan.*

Gulshah, August 3, 1908.

[1599]

5 G

P.S.—I attach a list of some of the more important reports and letters on the Luristan which I have submitted at various times during the past four years. Now that the whole question has come up again for consideration *de novo*, it is possible that they may be of interest as a record of proposals that have already been discussed, and as throwing some light on the state of Luristan in recent years.

D. L. R. L.

Inclosure 2 in No. 579.

LIST of Reports, &c., relating to Luristan, submitted by Vice-Consul Lorimer, 1904 to 1908.

No.	Date.	Subject.
30	July 4, 1904 ..	Forwarding proposed scheme for road through Luristan.
23	June 29, " ..	Notes on tribes, chiefs, and politics of Luristan.
47	July 31, " ..	Proposals for using Saimarra route.
248	January 30, 1906 ..	Wall of Push-i-Kuh and the Saimarra route. (see Bushire No. 632, of March 18, 1906, on same subject.)
76	February 11, 1907 ..	Possibility of making use of Sardar Mukarran's services in opening up Luristan.
244	June 3, " ..	Ditto.
67	September 5, 1908 ..	Re-suggestion of working in partnership with Muin-ut-Tujjar.
114	March 4, " ..	Forwarding comments on His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Kermanshah's letter No. 55, dated the 22nd October, 1907, re Kermanshah route.

(Initialled) D. L. R. L.

Isfahan, August 19, 1908.

[33433]

No. 580.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 247.)

Gulshah, September 10, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the monthly summary of events in Persia for the period the 13th August to the 10th September, 1908.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 580.

Monthly Summary No. 9.

Tehran.

TEHRAN has remained quiet during the last four weeks. The Shah, who still resides at Bagh-i-Shah, has suffered from fever and profuse bleeding at the gums during the last few days. His Imperial Highness Naib-es-Sultaneh has also been ill, and it was even reported that he was dead. The Shah proposes to spend the winter at Ferahabad, a new shooting box near Dochantapeh, a few miles east of Tehran, built by the late Shah. The Court continues to be the seat of endless and complicated intrigues, and it has now transpired that Naib-es-Sultaneh and Salar-ed-Dowleh were both subsidizing newspapers and agitators just before the *coup d'Etat*. The relations between Amir Behadur (Sepahsalar) and Colonel Liakhoff continues to be strained. M. Chapechal has left for Russia, avoiding Baku, where he had reason to fear his life might be threatened.

The Russian Liberal papers have sent correspondents to Tehran, who send their papers hostile comments on the attitude of the Russians here, and are especially bitter towards Colonel Liakhoff. The correspondent of the "Retch," M. Panov, is described by the Russian Legation as particularly active. He pursued the Zil-es-Sultan on his

arrival here on the 14th August, and finally obtained an interview. His Imperial Highness, thinking he had an ordinary Russian reactionary to deal with, abused the constitutional movement, much to M. Panov's disgust. The Russian Legation will probably be eventually forced to eject these correspondents, and in this connection it is interesting to note their attitude towards the Russian Bank Manager at Tabreez, M. Bodilowitch, the brother-in-law of M. Kokovtzeff, the Russian Finance Minister. This gentleman was accused of interfering in political questions at Tabreez, and to have entered into relations with the revolutionary leaders there. He was removed from the country within twenty-four hours, an Imperial Ukase having been issued for the purpose.

The Russian Bank has a claim of 13,000*l.* on Prince Jelal-ed-Dowleh, at present in Europe with his father, the Zil-es-Sultan. The Legation is pressing the Persian Government to sell his furniture, &c., by auction in order to meet the debt. When the Zil-es-Sultan's palace was looted on the 23rd June by the Shah's troops, the Jelal's "auderoon" was broken into and most of the contents looted. The proposal to sell off what little remains by auction is merely vindictive. A country house which has been in Zil-es-Sultan's possession for a number of years is now claimed by his sister, Banou Ozma, the Zil's great enemy, whom the Russians have throughout protected. Some Government officials were sent there a few days ago and officially handed it over to Banou Ozma. All these acts would appear merely to be intended to throw further discredit on the Zil-es-Sultan, who is identified in Persian eyes with British interests, and has always been supposed to have enjoyed British support.

The British and Russian Legations communicated the joint identic note to the Shah respecting the elections for a new Assembly to meet on the 14th November through their respective Dragomans on the 8th September. The Shah was not well enough to receive them and the communication was handed to the Foreign Minister.

A sort of Privy Council has been formed, which meets once or twice a week at Bagh-i-Shah to discuss affairs, and this body is supposed to be engaged in elaborating new election Regulations for the new Assembly and Senate. They are, however, quite incapable of arriving at any satisfactory conclusion, and the real work is in the hands of Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who drew up the last Regulations.

The activity of the German Minister regarding his cases here, which are chiefly connected with the German school, is most harrassing to the Foreign Minister, who declared that if the British and Russian Legations took up a similar attitude life would not be worth living. The German Minister has lately taken up some complaints raised by his Consular Representative at Bushire regarding the conduct of quarantine matters by Captain Williams.

The Persian Minister in Paris has been recalled to Tehran. This will leave the following six diplomatic posts vacant: London, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and Paris. The Minister to St. Petersburg, Mofakhani-ed-Dowleh, was appointed nearly a year ago, but still remains at Tehran. No one has yet been chosen for London.

Amir Nezam, who was Vizier to the present Shah when Valiahd at Tabreez in 1904, died at the beginning of the month. During the last year quite a number of prominent Persian statesmen have died, including the Atabek, Mushir-ed-Dowleh, Kavan-ul-Mulk, and Nizam-es-Sultaneh.

No newspapers have appeared since the 23rd June.

The following is a list of the present Ministers, Court officials, &c., for convenience of reference:—

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior ...	Mushir-es-Sultaneh.
Minister for Foreign Affairs ...	Ala-es-Sultaneh.
" War ...	Amir Behadur Jang.
" Justice ...	Mushir-ed-Dowleh.
" Education ...	Motamin-ul-Mulk.
" Public Works ...	Mohandis-ul-Mamalek.
" Court ...	Sultan Ali Khan.
" Finance ...	Kavan-ed-Dowleh.
" Telegraphs ...	Mukher-ed-Dowleh.
Administrator of Customs ...	M. Mornard.
" Posts ...	Amin-ul-Mulk.
Master of the Ceremonies ...	Amir Moazzam.

(Signed)

G. P. CHURCHILL,

Oriental Secretary.

Tabreez.

The situation is reported upon fully in a separate despatch.

Resht.

1. Serdar Afkham, the new Governor of Gilan, arrived on the 30th July. He was accompanied by Serdar Amjad (Amid-es-Sultaneh), notorious for the large number of people he put to death when last in Gilan.

2. The following troops arrived from Tehran in August: 300 horsemen, 400 infantry, 35 artillerymen, with two Uchatus mountain guns. This force was intended to subdue the district of Talish, but the soldiers refused to leave Resht, saying they were lured by hopes of plunder, and had not been told that they were to fight the people of Talish. They are living on the people of the town.

3. Owing to cholera in Russia, five days' quarantine was established at Astara, but has since been removed in consequence of representations made by the Russian Legation.

4. The Russian Financial Agent at Tehran has informed Mr. Marling that a Déauville railway for the projected harbour works at Enzeli would shortly be laid at that place. In this connection it is to be noted that Serdar Afkham, before leaving Tehran, personally promised the Russian Minister that he would arrange the question of the land at the mouth of the Murdab to his satisfaction. The Russian object is to get possession of the land on both sides of the entrance to the Murdab.

Mashed.

1. The Shah has sent a circular telegram to all telegraph masters to the effect that it is their duty to report on the state of the country and the acts of the Governors. He adds that he has other spies, and that if he hears from them that the Governor and telegraph masters agree to send in untrue reports he will punish them severely.

2. Prince Dabija was in Tehran early in September, and was to go to Russia on leave from there, so he will not take up his post as Consul-General at Meshed for some time.

Turbat-i-Hayderi.

1. On the 13th July Captain Keyes left for England via Meshed, on transfer to Baluchistan, and handed over charge of His Majesty's Consulate to Captain Watson, I.M.S.

2. Juma, an undesirable British Indian subject, who was deported to India in January last, returned to Turbat in July. He was caught, and imprisoned in the Consulate. The other man deported at the same time, Surkhru, is said to be in hiding near Turbat.

3. Colonel Von der Flaas, the new Russian Military Attaché in Seistan, passed through Turbat on his way to his post early in August. Captain Lyass quarrelled with him, and he put up at a caravanserai instead of at the Russian Consulate.

4. A Russian officer, Captain Secouratt, with two Cossacks was touring during July about Khaf and Karez. Captain Lyass was displeased at this, and said he had plenty of room to tour in the Meshed district.

5. Three Russian Cossacks passed through on their way to Kerman at the end of July. Four others passed through a week later on their way from Karez to Bunder Abbas. Four Cossacks arrived from Karez in the first week of August to replace four others sent to Karez, and two others arrived from Karez the following week. Captain Lyass, with four Cossacks and a Persian sowar, left on the 13th August for a fortnight's tour to Turshiz, Sabzevar, and Nishapur.

The Karez news-writer reports that a Russian officer and eleven Cossacks have arrived at Pul-i-Khatun and proceeded to Karez, presumably to relieve the detachment now there.

6. Some 400 families of Jaurshidis, who left Herat for Transcaspi, were apparently turned back by the Russians.

7. Upwards of 400 Berberis, fleeing from Afghanistan, were attacked by Afghans, and suffered considerable loss. The main body reached Persian territory.

Ispahan.

1. Bahrām Mirza, son of the Zil-es-Sultan, lately Governor of Irak, arrived at Ispahan on the 18th July.

2. On the Shiraz road two posts were robbed in the last days of July. The Yezd-Kerman and Yezd-Ispahan roads are infested with robbers, and the posts are continually delayed. The Deputy Governor of Kerman was attacked and robbed on his way to that town on the 30th July. On the Yezd-Shiraz road a caravan was also robbed. A caravan of some members of the Church Missionary Society was attacked on the Shiraz road, near Marg, and some money was taken from the servants. The chance arrival of some soldiers caused the robbers to make off before they had time to rob the baggage.

3. A crowd of Persians having interfered with the school teachers of the Mission school, Dr. Aganoor sent four men of the Consular escort to the school, after which the interference ceased.

4. The Russian Government recently bought the house occupied by their Consul-General for 3,500*l*.

5. Captain Lorimer arrived from Tehran on the 14th August.

6. M. Bogoevsky, the new Russian Consul-General, and M. Petroff, his Secretary, arrived on the 17th August. Prince Dabija left for Tehran on the 7th August.

7. Mr. Landon, correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," arrived from Tehran on the 16th August, and left for India, via Ahwaz, on the 22nd.

8. Though the news of the grant of a Constitution to Turkey and telegrams from the priests at Nejef and Kerbela supporting the Nationalists in Persia have encouraged the local priests to interfere somewhat with the Deputy Governor's administration, no active opposition to the new régime has been shown. The removal of Agha Nejefi and Agha Norullah seems probable when the new Governor, Ekbal-ed-Dowleh, who arrived on the 27th August, has established his authority.

Yezd.

The collection of the additional taxes which led to the agitation here two months ago is now being carried out by the Governor. Opposition is suppressed by force, and several men of a crowd who wished to take sanctuary in protest against the taxes have been severely beaten by the Governor's troops.

Kerman.

1. Serdar Motazid, late Governor, left for Tehran on the 16th July, but when last heard of was in a caravanserai on the Yezd road unable to proceed on account of robbers. Sahib Ekhtiar, the new Governor, has not yet left Ispahan for Kerman. He telegraphed to the Deputy-Governor asking for 13,000*l*., and on being told the money could not be got he removed him from his post.

2. A popular movement has sprung up in the districts, and Rubbar, Jiruft, and Rudbar are affected. Troops have been sent to quell the rising.

Seistan.

1. A Russian officer, Feodoroff, has lately been travelling in these parts. According to the Russian Minister he is one of several officers who arrived in Persia recently for practice in speaking the language after a course in the Russian General Staff School of Oriental Languages. He visited the Miankangi frontier, passing through Milak, Del Dost Mohammed, Gurgushi, and Takht-i-Shah. He was accompanied by four Cossacks. He visited the frontier from Takht-i-Shah to below Kuhab, and took many photographs. He is said to have posed as a British officer. M. de Hartwig stated that he was last heard of near Turbat-i-Hayderi on his way to Meshed, but there all trace of him was lost.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Von der Flaas, the new Russian Military Attaché in Seistan, arrived at Birjand on the 25th July on his way to Seistan. A new Russian Consul and doctor were expected shortly.

3. The local branch of the Russian Bank appears to be in a moribund condition.

Shiraz.

1. Entezam-ul-Mamalek, grandson of the late Kavam, has been appointed to all the posts held by his grandfather. He is 22 years of age.

2. The town of Shiraz and the Province of Fars appear to have quickly relapsed into disorder since the departure of Zil-es-Sultan. Robberies of posts are frequent, and there appears to be no control over the tribesmen.

*Persian Gulf.**Bushire.*

1. With the departure of the Zil-es-Sultan unrest has appeared in Fars. Fighting has broken out on the Shiraz road between the Chiefs of Kumar Takhte and Kemarej, and between the latter and Kazeroon. Several people are said to have been killed in Tangestan in tribal warfare.

2. The Governor has dispensed with the services of the regular troops, who formed the garrisons at Bushire and the other Gulf ports, and has raised local levies in their place.

Bunder Abbas.

Ektekar-i-Nizam has been appointed Deputy Governor, and took over his duties on the 28th July.

Lingah.

1. The obnoxious local Anjumen, the Anjumen-i-Azad, whose most active supporters were Sadid-es-Sultaneh, the Russian Consular Agent, and Mr. Brown, of the German firm of Wüneckhaus and Co., both hostile to British interests, was closed early in July by order of the Darya Beggo, and its sign-board and flagstaff were removed. The two persons named, however, re-erected the flagstaff, and gave out that the Anjumen was not closed, and that it was only a commercial institution. Mr. Brown has also been instrumental in getting two rifles, which had been seized from a smuggler by the Customs authorities, restored to the smuggler.

2. It was reported that Mr. Brown has obtained from the Governor-General of Fars letters of recommendation to the Deputy Governors of Bastak and Lar, as he contemplates visiting those districts to further the interests of his firm.

Mohammurah.

1. On the 19th July a native boat, under German colours, arrived from Bushire, with chandals for the Wüneckhaus wharf.

2. Seif-ed-Dowleh has been appointed Governor of Arabistan.

3. The Hawizeh people have been giving trouble, and Sardar Arfa contemplates active measures against him in the autumn.

4. A caravan of Messrs. Lynch, with goods mostly the property of the Bakhtiari Khans, has been robbed between Ahwaz and Ram Hormuz.

(Signed) C. B. STOKES, Major,
Military Attaché.

[33434]

No. 581.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 248. Confidential.)

Gulabek, September 10, 1908.

Sir,
YOUR telegram No. 243 of the 4th September, containing instructions to present without delay the joint communication to be made by the Russian Minister and myself to the Shah inviting His Majesty to summon the new Parliament for the 1st (14th) November, and urging on him the advisability, in the interests of peace, of publishing his intention to do so at Tabreez, reached me on the morning of the 5th instant. As

it was a Saturday, on which day M. de Hartwig is always particularly occupied with the dispatch of his weekly messenger, I contented myself with apprising him in the afternoon of the nature of your instructions, and called on him the next morning to discuss the manner in which the communication should be made. I do not know whether the Russian Minister was aware beforehand of the *pourparlers* in progress in St. Petersburg for this communication, but from a remark made by M. Baranowsky to Mr. Churchill that "if everything is going to be arranged in Europe without consulting the Legation in Tehran, Russia might as well be represented by a lay figure," I am disposed to think that he was not. I, at all events, had never mentioned it to him, as it seemed to me that, as the proposal was originally made by M. Charikoff, he would himself have kept M. de Hartwig informed if he thought that course desirable. M. de Hartwig, however, showed no surprise whatever. He read me the French text which he had received from St. Petersburg, and criticized one or two passages and expressions, observing that it was hardly sense to say that a Minister held a particular opinion at the instructions of his Government ("le Ministre de Russie estime, conformément aux instructions de son Gouvernement"), though he could express any opinion that was dictated to him; and pointing out that it was hardly logical to urge the Shah to declare irrevocable his intention to maintain the organic laws (the expression in the French text is "*lois manifestiques*") when in the opening words it was recognized that he was competent to modify them. He suggested in a half-hearted way that we should telegraph for authority to modify these expressions, but yielded readily when I pointed out that this would cause delay, and that, in view of our instructions to make the communication as soon as possible, we could very well take on ourselves to make such trifling verbal alterations, provided the general sense of the communication was preserved.

M. de Hartwig then said he supposed it was intended that the communication should be made in writing through the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I replied that I understood that it was to be made to the Shah directly, and I presumed that we must ask for an audience. To this the Minister demurred somewhat, and pointed out that, if his were the case, the communication would not have been drawn up in the third person. I said that this might well be an oversight, but that my instructions were quite explicit that the communication was to be made to the Shah himself. The Minister again gave way, but reminded me that as the Shah had been confined to his "Anderon" for some few days by fever, His Majesty would very probably be unable to receive us, and perhaps it would be better to send the Oriental Secretaries of the two Legations to Bagh-i-Shah to deliver the communication to His Majesty. To this I agreed, as it would evidently have been easy to defer the audience at the last moment on the ground of the Shah's ill-health. It was therefore arranged that a Persian translation of the communication should be made, and that copies signed by M. de Hartwig and myself should be presented to the Shah by M. Baranowsky and Mr. Churchill on the morning of the 8th instant, and that in case that His Majesty was unable to receive them, Ala-es-Sultaneh should be requested to be in attendance, in order that the document might be intrusted to him for communication to the Shah.

On the evening of the 7th instant I received a note from the Minister for Foreign Affairs informing me that His Majesty's indisposition would prevent the Shah from receiving the dragomans, and Mr. Churchill and M. Baranowsky on reaching Bagh-i-Shah thereupon handed the identic Memoranda to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who undertook to submit them to His Majesty.

The Shah is suffering from a sharp attack of fever and from his old malady of copious bleeding at the gums, *pyorrhœa alveolaris*, and according to the account of the dentist, Dr. Stump, who is attending him for the latter, was quite incapable of receiving any one.

A copy of the communication is herewith inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 581.

Joint Memorandum handed to the Shah by British and Russian Oriental Secretaries,
September 8, 1908.

AS His Imperial Majesty the Shah has made known his intention of shortly publishing the new Regulations concerning the approaching elections, the British Chargé d'Affaires

has the honour, in conformity with the instructions from his Government, and without in any way wishing to intervene in the internal affairs of Persia, to point out that it would be very desirable and opportune, in the interests of the definite pacification of the country, and of trade and of general prosperity, that His Imperial Majesty the Shah would be pleased to announce that his decision to maintain the Constitution which he has granted to his Empire is irrevocable, and that the Assembly for which the election of Deputies is now about to proceed will meet at Tehran on the 1st (14th) November (equivalent to the 19th of Shavval) of this year. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires is further instructed to draw the serious attention of His Majesty the Shah to the gravity of the situation at Tabreez and to warn His Majesty that the whole responsibility for the security of British subjects in that town will be laid on the Persian Government. Under these circumstances he considers it advisable that His Imperial Majesty's decision to proceed to the elections and to open Parliament on the 1st (14th) November should be communicated to and made public at Tabreez.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33435]

No. 582.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edouard Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 249.)

Sir,

Gulohak, September 10, 1908.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 216 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to report that after the severe fighting which took place at Tabreez on the 7th August and the two succeeding days open hostilities were not resumed until the 6th instant, though the opposition of the Nationalist party to the forces of the constituted authority remained undiminished and all efforts on the part of the leading merchants of the town, the Governor-General, and, more recently, His Majesty's Vice-Consul to effect a peaceful settlement of the difficulties of the situation have proved abortive.

Delegates of the Governor-General arrived at Tabreez on the 15th August for the purpose of investigating and reporting on the state of affairs to his Excellency, who, together with the Commander-in-chief, reached the town on the 20th ultimo.

On the 23rd ultimo the Local Assembly presented a Petition to his Excellency and formulated their demands, which were briefly that, while remaining loyal subjects of the Shah as long as he maintained the Constitution, they would not disarm until a Parliament was opened and the Members recalled; that the leaders in the Royalist quarter should be arrested and punished after trial; and that the affairs of the Province of Azerbaijan should be under the supervision of the Tabreez Local Assembly until Parliament reassembled. His Excellency promised to communicate these demands to the Shah.

At the end of the month, no reply having been received from the Tehran authorities, the tension between the two parties became sensibly greater and the Nationalists refused to listen to any offer of terms of peace unless the Constitution were guaranteed, elections ordered, and Parliament reassembled. The Nationalist forces at this time numbered some 10,000 men and efforts were made to enlist the services of Armenian revolutionaries in the cause. The Local Assembly formed a Committee to collect funds from all Christians to help towards meeting the daily expenses of keeping up the struggle and His Majesty's Vice-Consul received a warning not to go out alone, as the revolutionaries had decided to force the intervention of the European Powers by killing a foreigner or some Christian. It is difficult to believe that there was any real intention of carrying out this threat, but there is little doubt that the excitement in the town had by this time reached a very high pitch, and the lives of Europeans and Christians might at any moment have been in imminent danger.

On the 2nd instant, at the request of the leading merchants of the town, His Majesty's Vice-Consul presented the minimum of their demands to the Governor-General, who, though anxious to restore order, refused to grant these terms unless he received guarantees that the population would lay down their arms and would accept at least some of his conditions. He, however, expressed his willingness to see the leaders and verbally guaranteed to Mr. Stevens the safety of all those who should go to him. He further invited Mr. Stevens to accompany them if they wished it.

The merchants were unwilling to go to see the Governor-General, as they were in fear of the resentment of the population, but they consented to meet His Highness on neutral ground.

Mr. Stevens succeeded in arranging a meeting on these lines, and it was decided that a deputation of the inhabitants should wait on the Governor-General to discuss matters with him. During the course of these negotiations the revolutionaries had abstained from all acts of violence, but, on the evening of the 5th, some Government horsemen entered a large caravanserai and looted the shops of merchants in the Nationalist quarters. This action on the part of the Government forces naturally excited the utmost indignation among the revolutionaries, and was taken as a proof of the impossibility of placing any confidence in the good faith of the authorities. Fighting was consequently resumed on the 7th.

As regards the action of the Turkish Consul-General, there appears, from Mr. Stevens' reports, to be no doubt that he has done much to encourage the revolutionary party to continue the struggle. M. de Hartwig has received reports of a similar nature, and even to the effect that the Consul has intimated that Turkey will follow the example of the Powers in Macedonia and intervene in Persian affairs. His Excellency is suggesting to the Russian Government that the conduct of the Consul-General should be brought to the notice of the Turkish Government.

From information which I have received from various sources, the revolutionary party is being assisted both with men and guns by sympathizers at Tiflis. M. de Hartwig himself admits that about 400 fighting men have been sent to support them.

I have the honour to inclose an account of events at Tabreez down to the 10th August which I have received from Mr. Stevens.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 582.

Summary of Recent Events in Tabreez to August 10, 1908.

ON the 9th June it was reported in town that the Shah had arrested several Members of Parliament. Tabreez local Assembly, merchants, and clergy collected at the telegraph-office trying to obtain news from the capital and instructions from their Delegates. The town kept quiet until the 19th, when an attempt was made on Sayyed Hashim's life, who since that day has been one of the leading members of the Shah's party, and established with chief Mujtehed's his head-quarters in Anjuman Islamiyah at Davatchi (Shitorban) quarter.

From the morning of the 23rd June to this day house-to-house fighting has gone on daily, fierce at times, with intervals of a few days' rest in between, as reported by telegrams.

In Davatchi quarter were collected, besides the clergy, most of the rich people and land-owners. They had under their orders Suja-i-Nizam, with 100 Marand horsemen; Haji Faramarz Khan, with 100 of his own horsemen, and some 300 armed sympathizers of the Shah, mostly servants of these rich "Ayans"; later some 500 Karadaghi horsemen joined them under command of Rahim Khan. Opposed to these are Baghir Khan, a mason, at the head of about 500 or 600 "Fedayees" in the Kiabin quarter, and Sattar Khan, native of Karadagh, in the Amrakiz quarter, with about 1,000 Fedayees; added to these is the sympathy of a population compromised in the Nationalist movement. The Fedayees hold the "Ark," which is the Government rifle and ammunition store; they also have in their possession three mountain guns of 6 centim. and two of 9 centim. Royalists have also some three guns and mortars.

Fighting from barricades lasted until Rahim Khan arrived, when, on Russian Consul's intervention, all firing ceased, he having given a flag to the Khiaban quarter to protect them against Rahim Khan's horsemen.

On the 13th Rahim Khan entered the town, the Khiaban quarter surrendered, and delivered them their cannon and some 300 rifles belonging to Government.

Now presented itself the one good opportunity of restoring order without further bloodshed and to the Shah's entire satisfaction. But Rahim Khan was quite powerless with his wild cavalrymen, and his orders were not carried out. Indeed, the horsemen began looting and robbing everywhere in town whenever they found defenceless people. They even outraged women, with the result that the exasperated population rose to a man, rushed the summer residence where Rahim Khan had his head-quarters,

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and obliged him and his horsemen to fly to the outskirts of the town, whence he joined the Mujtehid in Davatchi.

At this time some elders of the town with some Russian subjects interviewed the Mujtehid with the hope of effecting reconciliation, but the fanatical old wretch refused to listen to such talk, declaring that they were all babies, and would have to be punished.

It must be said that the Russian Consul intervened on several occasions, but always seemed to do so when the Shah's party were getting the worst of it, keeping aloof when revolutionaries were hard pressed.

Since fifty days bazars are closed, business is at a complete standstill, and entire population is sick and tired of this state of things. Foodstuffs are very scarce, and prices have risen 100 per cent. Government troops are looting, robbing, burning houses and shops whenever the opportunity is found; as long as the revolutionaries held the shops on the confines of the Davatchi quarter not a pin was missed by any one, but when they had to retire to their own barricades, horsemen advanced and looted and burned every shop in the place. Therefore, as reported several times, the main object of the National party, since a month or so, is no longer to uphold the Constitution, but to protect life and property. I have no doubt that if the leading revolutionaries be captured and the Shah's party get the upper hand, the wild horsemen will play havoc in the town. Bazars and houses are sure to be looted, as they have been in all parts of the town where revolutionaries have no barricades; besides, there is no knowing how far such infuriated men—lawless, and without a chief able to check them—will go. It may safely be said that even the Christian quarter will not be spared, especially as it is crowded with refugees from all parts of the town.

A Committee named by the revolutionaries is collecting money from all who can afford it to defray daily expenses, which, I am told, amount to 600 tomans a-day.

The only hope of peaceful solution rests on Ain-ed-Dowleh. I am almost sure he will do little or nothing by force; the policy to be followed should be based on the collective telegram sent by Consular Corps to Legations.

Revolutionaries have plenty of ammunition, and can hold out quite a long time. Being desperate they will not lay down their arms unless they get sound guarantees for their lives and property. Can Ain-ed-Dowleh give such guarantees? I doubt it. On the contrary, it seems his policy will be one of coercion; indeed, he has sent some 500 Shahseven horsemen, the wildest of the kind in the Ardebil district, who have joined Rahim Khan in the Davatchi quarter.

Of course none of the local authorities can be found. The Acting Governor is in Davatchi, Karguzar is hidden, and, in order to obtain free passage to exits of town for some British subjects leaving for Russia, I was obliged to communicate with Sattar Khan and obtain his permit, his men having orders to search all travellers, goods, cases, carriages, &c., leaving or entering the town.

From the beginning of these troubles I have been hard pressed by natives to grant asylum to at least a few of the most compromised, and I must say it has been most disagreeable to have to refuse all protection and interference as long as danger was not imminent, and many a nasty remark has been heard by subordinate member of the Consulate staff against our Government and its present attitude towards a population who obtained the Constitution through us, and who were only begging us to help them to maintain it. I have often been warned by native friends not to go out alone in town when there is fighting, revolutionaries having made up their minds, should they be beaten and lose all hope, to kill one or two members of the Consular Corps, and thus oblige European Powers to intervene. I am, however, quite certain that such threats are *pro forma*, and I am sure Europeans run now danger anyhow as things stand at present. The only danger to Christians are the stray bullets flying about the town when fighting is going on, and shell-fire when the Ark is being bombarded.

It is just reported that Ain-ed-Dowleh reached Ardebil.

(Signed) CHARLES E. STEVENS.

[33436]

No. 583.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 250.)

Gulahék, September 10, 1908.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that for some time past there have been several refugees at His Majesty's Consulate at Shiraz. These persons, the first of whom, Hussein, son of Naib-es-Sadr and nephew of Hajji Ali Agha, leader of the Anjuman-i-Islamié of Shiraz, went to the Consulate on the 22nd July, have been driven to take sanctuary by the action of the Deputy Governor, Sardar-i-Firuz, who has been in charge of the province pending the arrival of Asef-ed-Dowleh, the Governor-General. Hussein was shortly after followed by Mirza Kassim Khan, brother of the late Motamed-i-Divan. These persons stated that, in spite of the amnesty issued by the Shah to all political offenders, they had every reason to fear the action of Sardar-i-Firuz against them and Kassim Khan, who received a promise from the Deputy Governor that his life would be respected upon payment of a bribe of 1,700 tomans and horses to the value of 2,000 tomans, was subsequently handed over to Kawami sowars who were removing him from Shiraz, when he escaped and went to the Consulate.

Other refugees followed during the month of August, but some, including the son of Naib-es-Sadr, were induced to leave.

The most serious case has been that of Kassim Khan for, during his stay in His Majesty's Consulate, the spoliation of his family and the plundering of his property has been carried out under the orders of the Deputy Governor.

The present condition of insecurity in the whole province and the total lack of confidence in the guarantees of the Deputy Governor make it impossible to induce Kassim Khan to put faith in the local authorities, and he now desires to leave Persia by Bushire, whither he would accompany Major Cox upon his return to that place.

It is clear that so long as the Deputy Governor, who is a notoriously unprincipled ruffian, is allowed to remain at Shiraz he will lose no opportunity of filling his pockets by threatening and plundering persons who have reason to think that their political opinions may lead them into danger.

I have repeatedly represented to the Persian Government the most serious effect which the presence of such an unscrupulous and incompetent official as Sardar-i-Firuz has throughout his tenure of office proved himself to be must have in the province, and have urged most strongly that he should be removed and that Asef-ed-Dowleh may arrive at his post with as little delay as possible. In spite of the assurances of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, his Excellency, though on his way to Shiraz, has not yet arrived at his post.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33437]

No. 584.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 251. Confidential.)

Gulahék, September 10, 1908.

Sir,

IN his telegram No. 125, repeated in your telegram No. 207 of the 17th ultimo, His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has reported that while the Russian Government agree in principle to the proposal for a railway from Mohammerah to Julfa and are prepared to enter on a discussion of the practical details, they consider that the question is intimately connected with that of an important external loan which the financial difficulties of the Shah render necessary.

There can of course be no question of the great benefits which must accrue to Persia from the construction of the lines contemplated even with the discriminating conditions which the Russian Government desire to impose in favour of Russian trade, but as regards the loan I am by no means convinced that any really considerable sum is required, and I venture to offer for your consideration some observations on this point and also, though with some diffidence, on the consequences which appear to me to be inevitable should such a loan be accorded. I take it of course for granted that His

Majesty's Government would in no circumstances be parties to any such operation except on the most stringent conditions that the loan will not be squandered.

It may at once be conceded that the Treasury is, and has for some time past been, empty; empty, that is to say, when any call is made on it for real public needs. I believe, however, that Persia can, and does, raise sufficient revenues to meet her expenditure, and in this opinion I am supported by Mr. A. O. Wood, the newly appointed Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia, who, from his long residence in the country, is well qualified to judge. M. Bizot also has expressed to me confidentially his opinion that financially Persia is by no means in so bad a case as is generally believed, but the efforts which have been made from very different motives by both the Medjliss and Reactionaries to prevent him from making any real examination of the situation, have been so successful that it would scarcely be just to him to quote his opinion as authoritative.

It is at any rate now pretty certain, in spite of all reports to the contrary, that the Maliat, the chief source of internal taxation, has been collected much as usual for the past two years by the local Governors throughout the country. But it is equally certain that it was never applied to the proper purposes. During the era of the first Medjliss it is probable that the Governors, at the instigation of the Shah, alleged inability to collect it, and trusted to the general chaos to cover their delinquencies by discreet bribery. Since the *coup d'Etat* of the 23rd June there is great reason to believe that the Governors have been made to disgorge very considerable sums, which have been used partly to pay the Royalist "troops" and partly to satisfy the rapacity of the Court Camarilla. The Maliat receipts may thus never have reached the Treasury, but there is no ground for supposing that they have diminished, and as the revenues from the two other most important sources, viz., customs and telegraphs, have indubitably improved, it may be inferred that the total revenues of Persia are, at the worst, not smaller than three years ago.

The question then arises is the revenue sufficient to meet the expenditure. With proper control over the latter, I believe that it is. It may be admitted once more that the Persian Budget of to-day—if such a thing were ever compiled—would show a formidable excess over the expenditure of twenty years ago. It is, however, probable that the expenses necessary for the ordinary administration have altered but little, and that the only serious and inevitable addition to the Budget is the service of the debts incurred under the late Shah, the excess Budget being accounted for by the incredible development of the pension system, which is the bane of Persian finance. The annual total payable under this head is probably unknown, but how considerable it is may be judged from the fact that a pension once acquired is practically unextinguishable, since a trifling fee will insure its continuation to his descendants on the death of the original grantee. Moreover, a small pension could be bought for three or four years' purchase, and pension orders ("kabs") are so numerous that they are a common object of speculative purchase in the bazaars; three months ago, for instance, they were sold at 30 per cent. of their face value, but the report of an impending foreign loan or advance has now brought the price up to 50 per cent. Recognizing that it was the first step towards attaining financial equilibrium, the late Medjliss made an effort to suppress the great majority of these pensions, but was not strong enough to carry its well-meant intention into effect. Another flagrant instance of senseless expenditure is the extravagant number of useless officials in every public department; but the catalogue of abuses is almost endless, and enough has been said to show that even a half-hearted measure of reform and retrenchment would probably bring necessary expenditure down to the level of the receipts, while rigid economy might show a respectable balance. It is, however, impossible to show any comprehensive figures; an approximate estimate of receipts might perhaps be attempted, but any figures given for expenditure would be scarcely better than guess work, and until the Financial Adviser has been furnished with data sufficient to prove the contrary I cannot abandon the belief that with fairly honest and intelligent administration the Persian Minister of Finance should be able to make both ends meet.

These conclusions, if only approximately accurate, must necessarily affect the question of a loan. In the Russian Memorandum, of which Sir Arthur Nicolson has been so good as to send me a copy, no specific reasons for its necessity are given; it is only stated that the amount will be important and no figure is mentioned. The subject is one on which M. de Hartwig and I have agreed that we must await a definite expression of opinion from the Financial Adviser and we have never discussed it. M. Bizot, however, seems to be no nearer to acquiring the necessary data to enable him to form such an opinion than he was within a month of his arrival, but from what he

has said to me confidentially I gather that he is very sceptical as to the expediency of a loan in present circumstances.

There are, of course, huge arrears of salaries and pensions; but it is probable that the claimants would be more than satisfied to compound for a trifling fraction of the amount nominally due, if they were assured of punctual payments in future. Under this heading, therefore, no very considerable sum need be estimated for. Arrears of pay due to the army are a convenient fiction invented in the interests of highly-placed personages, and can therefore be disregarded. There are, however, two financial operations of importance for which a loan might be justifiably utilized, i.e., the conversion of the advances from the English and Russian Bank which at present bear the high rate of interest of 12 per cent., and the payment of the floating debts of the Government to native bankers. What these latter may amount to is not known, but the total must be considerable. If carefully sifted, it would almost certainly be found that a large proportion are not properly Government debts at all, but have been acknowledged as such through the influence of highly-placed personages, while the remaining creditors could not improbably be brought to agree to compound for a reasonable figure.

Superficial as it necessarily is, I venture to think that this review of the position here is sufficient to show that the necessity, from a purely financial standpoint, of any considerable loan has still to be proved. But, from another point of view, a large foreign loan would be in the highest degree beneficial to Persia, inasmuch as it must, as I understand, be accompanied by conditions entailing a thorough reform of the financial system of the country. But here we are confronted with the lamentable fact that there is no effective desire for reform. I fear that if the experiment is tried, it will be found that officialdom, from the highest to the lowest ranks, the whole of the nobility and moneyed classes, and most of all the Shah's *entourage*, will be opposed to it, and it is even doubtful whether the support of the Medjliss itself can be counted on. The constitution of the body to be convoked on the 14th November under a new electoral law is still problematical; if it proves to be subservient to the Shah, or rather to the Court party, it will follow the line of conduct pointed out by them, and what that will be there can be no question; while if it should be of the same temper as the first Parliament, it will be suspicious of any scheme of reform inaugurated under Anglo-Russian auspices. In fact, if the small traders and artisans are excepted, hostility is to be anticipated from all the urban population, which alone is capable of making its influence felt, while the peasantry will remain indifferent on a question which they do not even understand.

There is also another point to which I have to invite your attention, namely, that any scheme of financial reform, the execution of which is intrusted to Persians, must, *ipso facto*, fail. The causes are the inherent defects of the Persian character, on which I need not dilate, but it is a fact I have never heard questioned by any competent and disinterested observer, either Persian or European. It follows, then, that European control in the Ministry of Finance—and perhaps, also, in the spending departments of the other Government offices—is indispensable.

The conclusions at which I have arrived may be summed up as follows: That Persian finance is in by no means so desperate a state as appearances would seem to show; that while a small advance may be required to relieve urgent necessities, the need of any considerable foreign loan requires careful examination; that the conditions of financial reform on which His Majesty's Government will assent to a loan will be unacceptable to Persia; and lastly, that no reform is possible unless carried out under European supervision. There is, therefore, the prospect that His Majesty's Government, by consenting to a loan, may be led into assuming indirectly a large measure of responsibility for the proper administration of Persian finances.

Such control would undoubtedly be of the highest benefit to Persia, but it is for His Majesty's Government to decide whether they are willing to share with Russia the immense difficulties of such a task; and I venture with the greatest deference to suggest that if this question is to be considered in connection with a scheme of railways, our interests will best be served by advocating the latter project and reserving the question of financial reform for later discussion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 585.

[33438]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 252.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram No. 209 of the 19th August, I have the honour to report that I have lost no opportunity of pressing on the Minister for Foreign Affairs the need for appointing a Minister to fill the vacant Legation in London, but so far without result. Ala-es-Sultaneh informs me that he has submitted a list of suitable persons to the Shah, but that His Imperial Majesty had rejected them all as holding views on internal politics of too liberal a character, while the persons whom His Imperial Majesty himself had mentioned for the post were quite unsuitable, and would never receive the agreement of His Majesty the King.

The Shah appears to be in the same difficulty with regard to most of the Persian Missions of any importance, for the Legations in Berlin, Rome, and Vienna are vacant, though Mushir-ul-Mulk, the present Chargé d'Affaires in London, has been designated for the Austro-Hungarian capital; while Samad Khan, the Minister in Paris, has just been recalled nominally in order to answer certain charges of peculation connected with the purchase of arms made by the late Shah from Messrs. Schneider or "La Creuzot," but in reality, I am informed, on account of the too liberal views he expressed in a recent interview with a journalist.

Even at St. Petersburg Persia is represented by a Chargé d'Affaires, as Mofakham-ed-Dowleh declines to go to his post until furnished with money.

Ala-es-Sultaneh asked me if His Majesty's Government would be satisfied were Mushir-ul-Mulk given rank as Minister Resident, to which I replied that it seemed to me rather a lame way out of the difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 586.

[33439]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 253.)

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram No. 241 of the 5th instant, in which you were so good as to inform me in what circumstances and on what conditions His Majesty's Government would be willing, as was contemplated in 1906, to make, with Russia, a joint advance of 400,000*l.* to the Persian Government.

I fear that there is little likelihood that the Financial Adviser will be in a position to justify such an advance within the immediate future. When, about two months ago, the possibility of an advance from Great Britain and Russia was first mooted, the Shah's advisers, who were so elated at the prospect of having a substantial sum on which to lay their hands, were ready to promise to abide by any conditions that might be imposed, in the belief that they would always be able to evade them. They even went so far as to make a show of carrying out M. Bizot's proposed reforms by allowing the Committee which he desired to create for the supervision of the Ministry of Finance to be appointed and to hold sittings, while orders were given—though not executed—that each Department should prepare and submit a Budget of its annual expenditure. But they never had the smallest intention of relaxing their hold on the Treasury, and consequently the complementary measure of appointing a Treasurer under the direct orders and control of the Minister of Finance was never effected. On the contrary, a new Treasurer, the notoriously corrupt Naser-es-Sultaneh, was appointed, and the waste and peculation of the public monies enmeshed by him goes on with increased facility. M. Bizot, who was at first encouraged by the Government's hypocritical professions to hope that something might be achieved in the way of reform, has now lost hope of effecting anything under the existing régime. On the 1st instant he obtained an audience of the Shah, in which he intended to expose to His Majesty the scandalous way in which the country's revenues are being squandered, but the reception which he met with from the Shah was cold, almost to discourtesy, and he thought it useless to carry out his intention.

M. Bizot would have, I think, no difficulty in producing a statement of really urgent claims on the Treasury, such, for instance, as the arrears of salary due to the

Persian Diplomatic and Consular Representatives abroad and to the Foreign Office officials. I venture to think, however, that so long as the present camarilla under Amir Behadur Jang retains its power we should refuse even this assistance, for the relief granted would merely mean that the small sums which are now secured for genuine public expenses would be embezzled. In these circumstances, I think it would be in the true interests of Persia that, rather than give any financial assistance, we should, on the contrary, seek to increase her embarrassments. So long as there is any prospect of screwing money out of the country so long the harpies about the Shah will resist reform, whether as a condition of a loan or through the agency of the Mejliss, and no more effective way of discouraging them occurs to me than that of cutting off every source of revenue which they can plunder. A beginning might be made by pressing vigorously for the payment of the overdue interest on the 1903-04 loan from the revenues of the Gulf ports assigned as a contingent security for its service. As you are aware, the establishment of the branch of the Russian Bank at Kermanshah is imminent, and as soon as it becomes a fact the customs receipts of that town, hitherto paid to the Imperial Bank of Persia for the service of its loans and advances, will be encashed by the Banque d'Escompte. It will then be necessary to insist that the lien of the Imperial Bank of Persia shall be transferred from Kermanshah to Bushire, and to demand that a large part of the customs revenues of Bushire, some 400,000 tomans per annum, shall be paid over to the bank. The extra straw in the shape of the interest on the 1903-04 loan, viz., 13,600*l.* (68,000 tomans) may assist to break the camel's back.

As regards the two conditions formulated in your telegram, the probabilities appear to be that the Shah will be obliged to convene Parliament before the Financial Adviser is in a position to recommend that an advance should be made, and I presume that should the Mejliss be sitting when the application is made His Majesty's Government would be disposed to consider that fact as sufficient fulfilment of the stipulation that the money is not to be used to suppress the Constitution. There is, however, always the possible contingency to be taken into account, that the new Mejliss may be so carefully packed, or so effectually intimidated by the Shah, that it would not defend its own existence.

The second condition that there shall be proper guarantees for controlling the expenditure of the money might be taken advantage of to extend the powers of the Financial Adviser. The two Legations have no effective means of exercising the control contemplated in connection with the proposed advance in 1906, but if they were instructed to insist that the necessary supervision should be intrusted to M. Bizot, that gentleman's position would receive an accession of influence and authority which is at present sadly wanting.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 587.

[33440]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 254.)

Sir,

THERE is little outward change to record in the general condition of Persia during the last month. The struggle at Tabreez still continues, and there would not seem to be much hope that the arrival of Ain-ed-Dowleh, the new Governor-General, with reinforcements under Sepahdar, has tended to bring it any nearer to a solution, and though for something like a month fighting ceased while negotiations for a compromise were proceeding, hostilities recommenced on the 6th instant owing to a singularly ill-timed act of bad faith on behalf of the Royalist forces. I am inclined to believe myself that it is beyond the Shah's power to put down the popular movement in Tabreez by force. As usual the state of affairs in the capital is reflected in the least settled parts of the country, and the roads around Shiraz and between Yezd and Isfahan are infested with brigands, while in Kerman a notorious local outlaw named Rifit-i-Nizam raised the standard of revolt at Fahry on the edge of the desert, and was not crushed without some difficulty. The districts around, as far as Bam, suffered much from pillage by both parties. Major Sykes reports a rumour of the presence of a very strong band of Turcoman raiders at Jajerm, north of Miandast, on the Tehran-Meshed road.

Otherwise the country generally is in its normal state, but the general uncertainty

as to the future has produced a great falling-off of trade via Bushire, and the Customs receipts have diminished correspondingly. Except at Tabreez, nowhere in the provinces is there any sign of activity on the part of the Constitutionalists, and the country as a whole seems to acquiesce, somewhat sullenly, in the existing state of affairs. Even the knowledge of the disapproval expressed by the spiritual chiefs of the Shias at Najef of the Shah's *coup d'Etat* has produced as yet no visible effect.

In Tehran there has been perfect tranquillity, and the cessation to some extent of the domiciliary visitations and petty persecutions by the Cossacks has produced a certain return of confidence. Thus here and there a few of the boldest of the Nationalists have recommenced to hold secret meetings, and a few of the leaders of the party still left at Tehran occasionally collect at Sani-ed-Dowleh's house, but it is doubtful whether political affairs hold a prominent place in these discussions, as the conclaves are disapproved of by the Shah and carefully watched by his agents. There is much speculation as to the modifications of the Constitution and Electoral Law which the Shah is said to be elaborating, but except that a "Council of Empire" has been formed—of whose powers and attributes no one seems to know anything definite, and which appears to have fallen flat—everything is wrapped in mystery. M. de Hartwig says that the Senate, which was provided for in the Constitution, is to be called into existence, but Ala-es-Sultaneh, who the Russian Minister considers would be an ideal President, tells me that he knows nothing of it, nor is he aware that there is any serious discussion of a remodelled Constitution. M. de Hartwig, however, has always insisted so strongly that the new electoral law is to be published in a few days, that it is to be presumed that something has been done, and no doubt under the stimulus of the identic communication made to the Shah by the British and Russian Legations on the 8th instant, an announcement on the subject will appear at an early date. It is too soon yet to pronounce on the effect of that communication on the populace of the capital; but it is to be hoped that it will revive the Nationalist spirit to take a practical part in the elections, but even should the Shah be so unwise as to disregard the friendly advice of the two Governments and refuse to convoke Parliament, it is unlikely that the popular party will find the courage to do more than close the bazaars in sign of protest.

To the Shah's entourage the communication must—as I believe it did to the Russian Minister—have come as a complete surprise. At present, I am told, they are giving out that the warning need not be taken seriously, as Russia can only have agreed to it to please England, and that she has no intention of urging it on the Shah. M. de Hartwig will no doubt take an early opportunity of correcting the belief, if it really exists, and it is to be hoped that the common action of the two Powers will then have a restraining influence on the Shah's camp. It is not easy to know precisely what goes on at Bagh-i-Shah, or what influence is uppermost with the Shah at any given moment, but it seems certain that Amir Behadur Jang, Sepahsalar-i-Azam, and Minister of War is virtually dictator of Persia. At the Council of Ministers, which meets daily in a tent in the garden, his is always the deciding voice, and it is he who carries to the Shah his own views which he represents to be those of his colleagues. Ala-es-Sultaneh told me that he was practically unable to see the Shah except in the presence of Sepahsalar, whose interference in any question, however little he may be competent to dissent it, always prevails. Amir Behadur having been the foremost among the Shah's advisers to persuade him that we seek His Majesty's downfall, it has been exceedingly difficult to get any business done, as all the more important affairs have to be referred to the Shah through his intermediary. It is improbable that this state of things can continue; indeed, I have been told that the Shah a day or two ago took Sepahsalar to task very sharply for having deceived him as to the state of affairs at Tabreez, and for not having been able to fulfil his assurances that the disorders there could be easily crushed. Owing to his quarrel with Colonel Liakhoff also, the Minister of War cannot count on Russian support, but although M. de Hartwig has more than once expressed to me his belief that Sepahsalar's influence with the Shah is most mischievous, it is scarcely probable that he will go so far as to recommend the Shah to rid himself of the one man of whose fidelity he is convinced. Amir Behadur has his most formidable rival in Ain-ed-Dowleh, and it was probably owing to his influence that the latter was sent to the apparently hopeless task of subduing the revolutionaries in Tabreez, and it is currently believed that even now he is endeavouring to discredit the Governor-General by thwarting his efforts towards conciliation.

Amir Behadur appears to have only two objects, firstly, to induce the Shah not to reassemble the Mejlis; and secondly, to enrich himself. His efforts for the latter are apparently very successful. There is no expedient that is not being employed to obtain

money nominally to carry on the Government, but really to fill the coffers of the Minister of War and his friends. Extortion, sale of Governorships and titles, and all the various devices common in the East are freely resorted to, and I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that since the beginning of July not less than 1,500,000 tomans must have been raised in this manner, possibly very much more. Probably not more than a third of this reaches the Shah, or is used for so-called public purposes, the remainder being divided up among the "Khalvat" (entourage). Yet the Shah is told that no money is available, and fresh efforts are made in his name to squeeze more wherever it can be found. Both banks are refusing to advance money to the Government on any pretext whatever.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33441]

No. 588.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 255.)

Gulahek, September 11, 1908.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 237 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Consul-General Wratishow giving an account of the negotiations between the Turkish and Persian Frontier Commissions down to the time of Taher Pasha's leaving for Gavar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 588.

Consul-General Wratishow to Mr. Marling.

(No. 13. Confidential.)

Urumia, August 25, 1908.

Sir,

SOME little time ago Mr. Miller and I advised Muhteshem-es-Sultaneh to press Taher Pasha to state definitely the Turkish claims along the frontier, which he had hitherto left very vague. Muhteshem finally followed our advice, with the result that Taher embodied his conception of the frontier in three Memorandums, of which I inclose translations, relating respectively to the boundaries of the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Van, Mosul, and Bagdad. In the last-named instance the frontier is indicated with some precision, though I cannot identify all the names mentioned, but in the two former Taher has followed his usual custom of vaguely enumerating districts the confines of which may vary according to the necessities of the moment. In reply to Muhteshem's request that he should enter more into detail, so that the line of his frontier could be exactly traced, Taher stated with some hauteur that this would be the work of "men of science" hereafter.

In general Taher has followed the frontier line as shown in the map furnished him by the Turkish general staff, which appears to agree with the one which His Majesty's Military Attaché at Tehran saw in the Chancery of the Turkish Embassy, and is based on Dervish Pasha's map; but Taher has in some respects struck out a line for himself, and claims Baneh, Sakiz, Soujboulak, and Solduz, which even Dervish Pasha recognized as Persian territory. I remarked to him on this discrepancy, and he replied that he was possessed of information, which Dervish Pasha lacked, proving that the above districts had belonged to Turkey previous to Sultan Murad's Treaty, and that therefore he claimed them as Turkish in order to avoid the reproach which he might otherwise incur of having betrayed Turkish interests.

I also hinted to Taher that British and Turkish interests might clash if the claim to the Karun were maintained, but he said that he could not help it, he was only following his instructions.

Taher kindly let me have a look at his staff map to-day, and I noticed that the most easterly point of the frontier of Turkish Baranduz passes just a mile to the west of Ardishai, and then turns north-east and traverses the summit of Mount Seir, only 6 miles from Urumia. According to the same map, the southern frontier of Anzel is provided by the Nazli River down to the lake, which leaves to Urumia only a strip

of land, perhaps 40 by 15 miles, instead of an extent of 70 by 40 miles under the *status quo* frontier régime. Both on the north and south the town would be quite cut off from the rest of Azerbaijan, with the Turks holding Solduz and Anzel.

On the Turkish staff map Khoi is not included in Turkey, but lies 3 miles to the east of the frontier, which at its most northerly point is formed by the River Aras. Kotur is left as a Persian wedge inclosed on two sides by Turkish territory.

Should the Turks try to annex Maku, which they claim, they might find the task one of considerable difficulty, as Ikbal-es-Sultaneh, the hereditary Khan, is one of the most powerful semi-independent Chiefs in Persia, and is quite content with his present privileged position.

Muhteshem and Taher have continued their acrimonious correspondence since the date of my last report, Muhteshem constantly appealing to the Treaty of Erzeroum, the *status quo*, the identic zone, and the acceptance by the Porte of the latter at Constantinople in 1875, and Taher in turn asserting that he cares for nothing but Treaties, the older the better, and that he recognizes neither the *status quo* nor the identic zone. Finally Muhteshem wrote that he could enter into no discussion outside the Treaty, the zone, and the *status quo*, and must refer the question to his Government—a vain boast, as his Government vouchsafes no reply to his constant appeals. On the other hand, Taher informed me to-day that the Turkish Commission would leave Urumia this week as he could not get Muhteshem to negotiate on the principles which he (Taher) considered fitting. They would, however, hang round the frontier for three weeks or so, probably in Gavar, so as to give Muhteshem a chance of changing his attitude. He also said that he did not wish to celebrate the Sultan's Accession Day here as he had no uniform with him.

I propose to ask Mr. Miller to join me in requesting Taher to remain here pending a reference to Constantinople and Tehran, as I presume that His Majesty's Government do not wish the negotiations to be again broken off. But we neither of us have any hope that the present Frontier Commission may furnish any useful result, though we fear that Taher's departure may be the signal for fresh Kurdish incursions.

Ali Riza Effendi, the Kaimakam of Gavar, has been for the last week in Anzel collecting tithes with an escort of zaptiehs. He declares that he is sent there for the purpose by the Mutessarif of Hakkari. I inclose the translation of a letter which he addressed to certain villages of the district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 588.

Taher Pasha to Muhteshem-ex-Sultaneh.

Memoranda stating Turkish Frontier Claims.

(Translation.)

August 12, 1908.—As already stated, His Imperial Majesty the Sultan ordered us to abstain from taking a single span of Persian territory. The Porte also directs us to act in accordance with the Imperial Decree, and our Commission, conceiving respect for right and justice to be the basis of its duty, demands that you should abstain from interfering with the places which Treaties confirm as ours.

We hasten thankfully to reply as follows to your desire that we should state clearly what localities belong to the Imperial dominions. We content ourselves with specifying to-day only the boundaries of the Vilayets of Van and Erzeroum, namely, the districts of Ushnu with Dashtibel, part of Baranduz, Morgavar, Berdasur, Dasht, Tergavar, Baradost, Upper and Lower Anzel, Somai, Charik, Gherdian, Direk, Hoder, Rokaveh, several villages besides the seven villages whose names are known, Alend, Sekman Ova, Babajik, and the district of Maku with its dependencies as at present constituted.

August 15.—The Vilayet of Mosul. The frontier passes from Ushnu between Dool and Solduz to the shore of the Lake of Urumia, and from there follows the shore of the lake as far as the mouth of the Jigato River, and thence follows the Jigato towards its source till it joins the border of the Sanjak of Suleimanieh, and along with Solduz, Sanjbolak, Serdesht, Baneh, Sakiz, the whole of the district of Zerzer with its arable and pasture lands are by Treaty the property of Turkey.

August 18.—Let us now explain the frontier of the Vilayet of Bagdad. The

frontier line follows the Karun River from Mohammerah as far as Kut-el-Abid. Leaving Kasr Kharabeh on the Persian side it passes the Zab Canal and then follows the Serib River. Leaving the place called El Fazil to Persia, from Howeiza it follows the ancient course of the Kerkheh River and reaches Kut-i-Sheikh Bahram. Afterwards following the above-named river, it passes by Kaleh Shapoor and reaches the dividing-line of the waters of Kuh-i-Kebir. Then following the above dividing-line it passes Molleh Penjum Pass, and passes along the main ridge of Kaleh Rak Shelem and Keehan and divides the summit of Manisheh. Then at Tund Bahr, following the main ridge of Gul Atchmaz Mountain and Kaleh Jiz Mountain, it leaves the plain of Ghevadir to Persia, and, having the territory of Kamekeh on this side of it, follows for a little Gul Amir and Simav Mountains. Afterwards it passes by Derbend and reaches Tevahi Mountain opposite Seyid Kanir and arrives at Sermil. From Sermil it includes on this side Bileki of Delaku Mountain looking towards Sermil, Tarikah, and Kani Kelb Ali, and then traversing the Pass of Derten reaches Siah Khan, Kan Gul, Pehlul, Kuh Naveh, and Cheshmeh-i-Kalai Zenjir. From there it takes in Dasht-i-Leyl on our side and goes to Pars Mountain. From there it passes along the ridges of Sefileh Mountain and comes to Hara Hara Mountain. From there it joins the frontier of the Sanjak of Suleimanieh.

Inclosure 3 in No. 588.

Kaimakam of Gavar to Anzel Villagers.

12th Rejeb.

(Translation.)

TO the Kethudas and white beards (give some names) of the village of Jebel Kendi: In the name of God, the tithes of your village have been put up to auction. If you wish to buy them yourselves, come to Kehriz and hire them and go back again. Please God, to-morrow I shall go to Kulunji.

(Official of the districts of Somai, Baradost, Anzel, and Charik)
(Signed) ALI RIZA, Kaimakam of Gavar.

Exactly the same letter was addressed to Imam Kendi.

[33442]

No. 589.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 256.)

Gulabek, September 11, 1908.

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the diaries of the Military Attaché, Meshed, Nos. 32 to 35 inclusive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 589.

No. 32.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending August 8, 1908.*

Summary of News.

(Secret.)

SARAKHS reports rumours of cholera in Afghanistan, and of quarantine being established along the Russo-Afghan frontier; but the Russian newspapers report that quarantine has already been imposed at all the ports on the east of the Caspian, on account of cholera at Astrakhan.

2. The Khan of Khiva has visited Tashkent to pay his respects to the new Governor-General.

3. Termez reports that the Russians are erecting a regular cotton-spinning mill there; the machinery was brought to Termez, in pieces, by steamer.

4. Further details of the breaches caused by flood on the T. O. Railway show them to be of such a serious nature that through traffic could certainly not be resumed before the end of July—perhaps not till nearly the middle of August. This means that the railway has been totally interrupted for a period of a month.

5. As this railway is interrupted for days together by snow in winter, and for long periods like this by floods in summer, its reliability in time of war is open to considerable doubt.

"Transcaspian Review."

July 22.—The Minister of Communications has ordered 200 oil-tank waggons to be transferred from the Vladikavkaz Railway to the C. A. Railway.

July 25.—The daily takings of the Feroza Railway are now 260 roubles, and this amount is expected to increase shortly. 2,000 Surt workmen are now engaged in Cheleken; 200 of these have lately arrived, and a lot more are expected shortly, as the output of oil is increasing.

July 28.—As there is cholera in Astrakhan, quarantine (against arrivals from the west of the Caspian) has been imposed at Alexandrovsk, Krasnovodsk, Chikishliar, and Hassan Kuli.

July 29.—In 1907 there were in the Merv district 32,097 cattle and 819,193 sheep. Of these, 1,594 cattle and 78,877 sheep were imported from Afghanistan in 1907.

Turkestan News.

July 23.—The three most serious breaches on the Tashkent Railway between the stations of Tumen-Arik and Chieli are: (1) 5 versts from Tumen-Arik; (2) 200 sagins from the first place; (3) 2 versts from the station of Chieli. From Tumen-Arik to Chieli the distance is 26 versts; of this only 7 versts are in order, the remaining 19 versts being in such a bad state that passengers have to walk the whole of the 19 versts.

Bridges are going to be built to span the three breaches above mentioned; these bridges may be ready in a week's time. Till then no trains can pass.

July 24.—The post is now being carried in a "waggonette" over these 19 versts of damaged line.

July 25.—General Mishchenko left Tashkent on the 9th July for Troitskoe, where he inspected the 1st Turkestan Artillery Brigade, the 5th Cossacks, the camp of the Tashkent Fortress Artillery, 1st Turkestan Rifle Brigade, and Sapper Battalion. On the 10th July he saw the practice of six batteries of artillery.

Askabad Report.

July 26.—Six waggons full of ordnance stores passed through E.; they had a special infantry escort with them.

July 28.—A fight took place in the bazaar between the Armenians and Turkomans; a number were wounded on both sides, but none killed.

Sarakhs Report.

July 27.—Fifteen Cossacks came in from Pul-i-Khatum.

It is said that there is cholera in Afghanistan, and that quarantine is being established all along the Russian frontier. I hope to report more fully on this subject next week.

Chorjui Report.

July 21.—Fifty soldiers passed W. during the night.

July 23.—Forty men of the 15th and 19th Turkestan Battalions came in by steamer from up-stream.

July 25.—Thirty artillerymen passed E.

July 27.—Thirty men of the 2nd Railway Battalion passed E.

July 28.—Twenty men of the 1st (Astrakhan) Cossacks came in from Khiva and left W. by rail.

Garrison of Chorjui:—

17th Turkestan Battalion: 800 strong.

Detachments of the 15th, 18th, 19th, 20th Turkestan Battalions: total strength = one battalion.

Thirty men 2nd Artillery Brigade.

Amu Darya flotilla and railway troops as usual.

Termez Report.

July 12-27.—During this period three steamers have come in, i.e., two mail steamers and one extra steamer.

These steamers brought in 200 boxes rifle ammunition, thirty bales soldiers' clothing, and a cotton spinning machine. This cotton spinning machine is in parts; it formed the principal cargo of the extra steamer.

This cotton spinning machine is complete in every detail, and a cotton mill is to be built on a spot 160 sagins from the large fort wall, just outside the south gate, on the east side of it.

The work of building this factory has been already commenced.

This is the first attempt that has ever been made to establish a regular cotton factory here, though the Russians have before had machines for cleaning and pressing cotton.

The Governor and staff of Termez have gone into camp, as have also most of the troops.

Samarkand Report.

July 21.—One hundred and thirty-two packages of stores arrived from Tashkent.

July 22.—Twenty-five bales of clothing were sent W. from store here.

July 26.—The Khan of Khiva passed through E., en route for Tashkent, to visit the new Governor-General.

July 28.—The Khan of Khiva returned from Tashkent, waited here a day as the guest of the Governor of Samarkand, and then left for Khiva.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,
Military Attaché.

Mashed. August 8, 1908.

Inclosure 2 in No. 589.

No. 33.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Meshed, for week ending August 15, 1908.*

Summary of News.

(Secret.)

THE "Transcaspian Review's" statement (last week's diary) that quarantine had been established at Krasnovodsk and other places was incorrect.

2. On account of a large number of Jamshedis having crossed from Afghan to Russian territory near Kushk, and to prevent any more crossing over, the Afghans have sent some troops from Herat to the Kushk frontier. A few skirmishes of no particular military importance have taken place between the Afghan frontier troops and the Jamshedis; one little fight occurring between two parties of Afghan troops, who met in the dark and mistook one another for Jamshedis or for Russians.

3. The Russians have recalled to Kushk all troops belonging to that garrison who were temporarily absent at Feroza or elsewhere. Reinforcements amounting to about 300 infantry and 300 mounted infantry, the latter probably the mounted scouts of the Merv Infantry Brigade, have also been sent to Kushk, according to our Agent there.

There is nothing alarming in these moves of Russian troops, which seem to be only measures of precaution on account of the somewhat disturbed state of the frontier.

4. During the first week in August the C.A. Railway was totally interrupted by two serious flood breaches between Krasnovodsk and Askabad, the breaches being, according to our information, near the stations of Jebel and Kazanjik.

A reliable observer, who has just arrived in Meshed from Krasnovodsk, states that the damage near Kazanjik was of the most serious nature, a verst of the railway being regularly washed out, the ballast being swept away, sleepers displaced, and the rails bent and twisted anyhow.

5. So, during the first week in August, both the Central Asian and Tashkent Orenburg Railways were completely interrupted. In war time this would be more than awkward.

"Transcaspian Review."

August 2.—During the month of April, 223,800 poods of cotton were exported from Turkestan to Russia by Krasnovodsk, and 287,710 by the Tashkent Railway.

Turkestan News.

July 29.—On account of the interruption of the Tashkent Railway, the price of sugar and other commodities has risen considerably in Tashkent.

Messrs. Nobel's naphtha works at Cheleken are now turning out from 10,000 to 12,000 poods of petroleum daily.

August 1.—The Tashkent Railway has purchased 10,000,000 poods of naphtha from Messrs. Nobel for the coming (i present) year. Rate from the 15th May to the 15th October was 28½ kopeks per pood, and from the 15th October to the 15th May 30½ kopeks per pood.

August 2.—The breaches on the Tashkent Railway between Chieli and Tumen-Arik have been repaired, but the line is still interrupted this (i.e., Tashkent) side of Tumen-Arik.

Krasnovodsk Report.

July 18.—The Commandant of this section of the Frontier Guard came in by rail from E. with fifty men of the 1st Railway Battalion, the latter came for duty on the railway here.

July 20.—Fifty men of the 2nd Railway Battalion came in by rail from E. The above two parties of railway troops have come here to replace the ordinary civilian workmen on the railway, nearly all of whom have gone to Cheleken; 400 ordinary railway workmen left this place for Cheleken, and then a party of unskilled native labourers followed them; 600 workmen have left Kizil Arvat too for Cheleken. All these men are being temporarily replaced by soldiers.

July 21.—The Governor of Krasnovodsk has left by steamer for Chikishliar and Hassan Kuli.

July 28.—Arrivals from Astara state that there are four battalions of Russian infantry encamped near there expecting orders to march to Tabreez, if required, to restore order.

The Russian war-ships and troops collected at Ashurada are said to have dispersed.

During the last fortnight five steamers have come in and unladed quantities of rails, sleepers, and other railway material, and also a large amount of planks and other building material. The railway material is said to be for the repair of the line. Numbers of Persian refugees continue to pass through en route for Baku.

There are rumours of cholera at Baku, and various sanitary precautions are being taken here. It is very hot here now.

Askabad Report.

August 2.—The railway between Askabad and Krasnovodsk is interrupted, having been damaged by flood near the station of Kazanjik, so the mail train from Merv stopped here the whole night instead of going on W.

August 3-5.—Passengers and mails are being carried to and from Krasnovodsk; but all the trains from Krasnovodsk are several hours late, as the line is completely interrupted, and passengers have to leave the train and walk a distance of several versts, where the line is damaged, to another train on the other side of the breach.

On the 5th August a party of 300 men, 1st Transcaspian Battalion, with 300 mounted infantry and some machine guns, left Askabad on some special service, the exact nature of which I could not discover.

Sarakhs Report.

August 5.—I have made inquiries about cholera in Afghanistan and quarantine on the frontier. There is no cholera in this part of Afghanistan, and the Russians do not

intend to place any quarantine on the frontier, as far as I can ascertain. The Russians seem to have dropped the question of cholera in Afghanistan.

The matter that is exciting the whole of the frontier now is the arrival of a number of Afghan Jamshedi refugees at Kushk. The Afghan frontier troops are trying to stop these refugees from crossing into Russian territory, and several fights have occurred between the different parties. (I believe that the principal fight that occurred was between two parties of Afghan troops, who met one another in the dark, and did not recognize one another.—H. S.)

Merv-Kushk Report.

July 30.—200 infantry with two machine guns left Merv for Kushk.

August 2.—100 Engineers and 100 mounted infantry left Merv for Kushk.

August 7.—300 men of the 1st (this figure not very clear, might be 4th.—H. S.) Transcaspian Battalion passed through to Kushk.

August 8.—Seventy men of the Frontier Guard passed through for Maruchak. The whole of the Kushk garrison has now been brought back to Kushk from Feroza and other places. Some extra mounted infantry have been brought to Kushk too. All work on building, irrigation, &c., in the neighbourhood of Kushk has been stopped. Trade also is suspended, no Afghans coming across the frontier now.

The reason of all this alarm is that the Afghans have moved some troops up to the frontier to prevent any more Jamshedis from crossing from Afghanistan into Russian territory. Already several skirmishes have occurred between these Jamshedis and the Afghan frontier troops, so the Russians are taking precautions on their side of the frontier.

Tashkent Report.

(One Report from this man is missing.—H. S.)

July 25.—The T. O. Railway is still interrupted, the damage done by floods in the neighbourhood of Chiyali (Chieli), the eighteenth station from Tashkent, not having yet been made good.

July 26.—One hundred Cossacks came in by C. A. Railway. These are Cossacks of the Caucasus, and are said to have come from Askabad.

July 27.—Two hundred men of the Zerebulak Battalion left by C. A. Railway. They had picks and spades with them besides their arms and accoutrements.

July 28.—Fifty infantry came in by C. A. Railway. (Apparently Andijan Battalion, but badge not very clear.—H. S.)

July 31.—Two hundred infantry came in by T. O. Railway.

August 2.—Three hundred infantry left by T. O. Railway. (These two moves seem to be local.—H. S.)

The number of gendarmes on duty at Tashkent station has been raised from six to twelve.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,
Military Attaché.

Mesched, August 15, 1908.

Inclosure 3 in No. 589.

No. 34.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Mesched, for week ending August 22, 1908.*

Summary of News.

(Secret.)

THE two batteries of artillery, usually quartered at Samarkand, have returned there. No. 4 Field Battery has returned from the annual artillery training camp near Tashkent. No. 6 Mountain Battery did not attend this camp. It was sent westwards with other reinforcements at the time of the Belasuvur war scare, and was then kept at Askabad for about a month, after which it returned to Samarkand in detachments, with or after the other troops which were sent back eastwards at the same time.

2. The state of the Jamshedi affair in the Kushk district remains unchanged. No more Jamshedis are reported to have crossed into Russian territory. The Turkomans

are seriously discontented at this invasion of Jamshedis into their ancestral grazing grounds.

3. The damage to the Central Asian Railway between Krasnovodsk and Askabad seems even more serious than reported by our Askabad correspondent last week. It has now been notified that no goods will be accepted for transport over this section for another month.

4. Termez reports that a strong survey party is engaged on the survey of a cart road from Termez to Khokand via Kolab. It is said that the construction of this road is to be commenced as soon as the survey is completed. The work is expected to be very difficult, the country being broken and hilly.

5. Termez reports the presence there of a virulent form of fever, from which six to ten soldiers a day are dying.

Plague, as well as cholera, is reported in the Astrakhan district.

"Transcaspian Review."

August 6.—All sanitary precautions have been taken against cholera at Krasnovodsk.

August 7.—The C. A. Railway has been badly damaged by flood between Askabad and Krasnovodsk, and through traffic is interrupted. Six versts of line are wrecked on the east side of Kazanjik. There is another break at verst 233, and again near the station Pereval. Besides the actual breaks, the line is so much damaged over a great part of this section that the speed of trains has had to be reduced to 5 versts an hour.

August 9.—The water of the Syr Darya is subsiding, and it is said that the T. O. Railway will be in working order by the 1st (14th) August.

Plague is reported in the Astrakhan Government. Three deaths have occurred, and five fresh cases are reported.

August 12.—Notice has been issued that, on account of the damaged state of the C. A. Railway between Askabad and Krasnovodsk, no goods will be accepted for transport on this section for another month.

The Council of the Central Asian Railway has proposed to the Central Railway Administration (*i.e.*, Minister of Communications) that the Central Asian and Tashkent-Orenburg Railways should be united under one administration, and that a third Railway Battalion should be formed with Tashkent as its head-quarters.

Askabad Report.

August 7.—Twenty Taman Cossacks left W. by rail.

August 9.—About fifty gun-wheels came in from W. and were sent on E.

August 11.—All the week the mail trains from Krasnovodsk have been coming in at any hour of the night, over twelve hours late. This is due to the delay caused by transferring passengers and mails from one train to another where the line is damaged between Krasnovodsk and Askabad.

Sarakhs Report.

August 7-14.—About sixty horses have been supplied to the infantry battalion here for their mounted scouts and machine guns. On parade to-day I saw forty-two mounted infantrymen.

The Turkomans of the Sarakhs and Merv districts are much annoyed with the Russians for their having given land in the Penjdeli district to a large number of Afghan Jamshedi nomads. The Turkomans say that this infringes the pastoral rights which they have had from time immemorial. As a retaliatory measure they threaten to emigrate into Afghanistan.

Termez Report.

July 28 to August 6.—Two steamers came in during this period. Four more survey officers came in by these steamers.

Altogether eighteen survey officers, under the supervision of three Colonels, are engaged on survey work in this district. The principal thing which they are engaged on is the survey of a (cart) road from Khokand to Termez. This road will come from Khokand via Kara Tikan, Kolab, and Baijawan. It is apparently seriously intended to

construct this road when the survey is finished, as pegs are being put in the ground to mark the course of the road. The country to the east of Termez is so rough and rocky that it is almost impossible to march troops by this route now; but if the road were made it would be of the greatest possible value, not only for marching troops, but also for bringing supplies into Termez.

A virulent kind of fever exists here now, both among the troops and inhabitants of Termez. Six to ten soldiers a day are dying of this fever now. The training of the troops has had to be suspended on account of it. The medical officers ascribe this fever to over-indulgence in fruit. What the soldiers think about it can be seen by the following Circular letter from them, which was thrown into the house of the Commandant of the 15th Battalion:—

"Overwork is the cause of the sickness among the troops. These constant parades with arms and accoutrements, weighing more than a pood; these returns to barracks at midday, after tramping out 15 versts, not to mention the wretched food the soldiers get. Officers ride horses and eat good food, so they do not fall sick. Doctors take no care of the poor soldiers, they only talk about eating fruit. Unless the officers treat the soldiers better, they will take effectual steps to right their own wrongs."

Samarkand Report.

August 3.—The 4th Field Battery returned from Tashkent. As the 6th Mountain Battery returned some time ago, the garrison is practically complete. (Considerable doubt existed for some time as to whether No. 6 Mountain Battery had left Askabad and returned to Samarkand with the rest of the troops that returned eastwards after the Turkish war scare had subsided, as we had no definite news of its departure from Askabad, though Merv and other places reported parties of men passing E. who apparently belonged to it. Subsequent inquiries from Askabad showed that the battery had left in detachments, and Samarkand definitely reported that it had returned there.—H. S.)

It is said here that the Khan of Khiva, on the occasion of his late visit here, offered his services in the event of war with Afghanistan.

August 6.—Orders have been issued that all boys who attend the new school here are to wear uniform. This is much resented by the people here, who consider this as a preliminary to introducing compulsory military service here, so a general resolution has been adopted to resist this order.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, Captain,
Military Attaché.

Mesned, August 22, 1908.

Inclosure 4 in No. 589.

No. 35.—*Diary of Military Attaché, Mesned, for week ending August 29, 1908.*

Summary of News.

(Secret.)

GARRISON reports from Sarakhs, Chaghui, and Termez show the garrisons of these places to be fairly normal. Our agents report that the mounted scouts of the infantry battalions are generally exercised on parade, manoeuvre, &c., with the battalion (pack) machine-guns and their detachments, which are also mounted, quite independently of the battalions to which they belong. This is specially noticeable at small places like Sarakhs. At large stations the mounted scouts and machine-guns of the whole infantry brigade are formed into mounted machine-gun companies, which work more with the artillery than with the infantry. By this arrangement the infantry battalions seem to lose the use of both their scouts and machine-guns.

2. Light mail trains are commencing to slowly straggle through again on both the Central Asian and Tashkent-Orenburg Railways, though neither of the lines is properly repaired yet, or fit for heavy traffic.

The work of repairing the Central Asian Railway has been much delayed by the intense heat, which has caused a large amount of sickness among the workmen employed.

3. The garrisons of all Transcaspian and Oxus stations are so overcome by the

heat that all training has had to be suspended, and the soldiers kept out of the sun, as was the case formerly with British troops in India during the hot weather. The general idea is that the Russian soldier's thick head gives him an immense advantage over the Briton in this respect, but our Krasnovodsk report this week seems to shake this theory.

4. Our Termez correspondent says that further trouble for the English is brewing in Afghanistan.

5. The Afghan Jamshedis, some 100 families or 3,000 souls, are settled for the present at Chaman-i-Bed, between Kushk Post and Penjdeh. On their raids into Afghanistan they have robbed and carried off into Russian territory some Afghan flocks; in retaliation for this the Afghans have carried off some flocks belonging to Russian Turkomans. This has increased the Turkoman's dislike for the Jamshedis.

"Transcaspian Review."

August 15.—It is very hot in Askabad now; 32° Celsius in the shade.

August 16.—There is a splendid cotton crop in Fergana this year. It is estimated that 15,000,000 poods of cotton will be exported to Russia this year by the C.A. Railway only.

One hundred waggons full of goods are waiting at Tashkent, unable to proceed to Russia on account of the break in the T. O. Railway.

August 18.—The floods on the Syr Darya have caused 1,500,000 roubles damage (to the T. O. Railway) up to date only.

Two hundred and seven waggons full of goods for Tashkent are delayed at Samara.

Turkestan News.

August 11.—The Tashkent Railway has been opened for traffic from Chieli to Timen-Arik.

The Tashkent Railway has been sufficiently repaired to allow mail train No. 3 to get through from Orenburg on the 10th August.

Krasnovodsk Report.

July 31.—On the 31st July and 1st August there was heavy local rain between Krasnovodsk and Kizil Arvat. This rain caused floods from the mountains, which seriously damaged the railway-line, rendering 48 versts totally impassable by a train. I went to see this damaged line, and found that the injuries extended from Jebel to past Kazanjik. The worst break was near the station of Kazanjik, where 14 versts of the line were wrecked. No train ran over this damaged section up to the 11th August, though the train ran every day from Krasnovodsk to Jebel; 1,300 men were collected to make good these defects, but the extreme heat makes the work difficult, many of the Russian workmen dying from sunstroke.

August 3-12.—No movement of troops or stores on account of the break in the railway.

There is general alarm here at the large amount of sickness here on account of the heat. The whole garrison of Krasnovodsk may be said to be *hors de combat*. All training is suspended, and the soldiers are afraid to go out in the sun at all, on account of the number of cases of sunstroke which have occurred.

Sarakhs Report.

August 14-20.—The Jamshedis, 400 families in number, are still in the Kushk district, being camped at Chaman-i-Bed, where they have been given land. There are a number of Afghan troops all along the frontier to prevent any more Jamshedis crossing into Russia. Several skirmishes have taken place between the Jamshedis and these Afghan troops. (We have no news of any such fighting. The Jamshedis have raided Afghan flocks, and the Afghans—probably the irregular cavalry—have made counter-raids on the Russian Turkomans' flocks.—H. S.)

The infantry battalion here has now 100 horses. These are for all purposes: for the machine-guns, mounted scouts, &c. (? regimental transport too.—H. S.). The machine-gun detachment is mounted, and works with the mounted scouts.

Garrison of Sarakhs:—

5th Infantry Battalion: 900 strong, including scouts and machine-gun party.
25 Kavkaz Cossacks.
25 Frontier Guard.
Details of Intendance, medical, &c.

Charjui Report.

July 31.—Fifty large boxes stores came in from E., and were put on board steamer for up-stream.

August 1.—Fifty men 2nd Railway Battalion passed through W.

August 5.—Twenty men of the 4th (Orenburg) Cossacks came in from Kerki, and left by rail W.

August 6.—Forty men of the 14th Turkestan Battalion came in by rail from E.

August 8.—Two small guns, all covered up, came in from E.; one went on W., the other was put on board steamer for up-stream.

August 9.—Thirty men of the 15th and 19th Turkestan Battalions came in by steamer from up-stream.

August 10.—Twenty men of the 2nd (Ural) Cossacks passed through E.

August 11.—One hundred bags flour came in from E., and were put on board steamer for up-stream.

August 13.—Forty Kavkaz Cossacks passed through E.

August 15.—Six boxes rifle ammunition taken from the magazine here and sent to Khiva.

Garrison of Charjui:—

17th Turkestan Battalion, 800 strong.

Detachments of the 14th, 15th, 18th, 19th Turkestan Battalions:
total strength = one battalion.

300 railway troops.

250 men Amu Darya flotilla.

20 men 2nd Artillery Brigade.

Termez Report.

August 12.—During the last week two steamers have come in with the following Government stores:—

Soldiers' clothing	..	..	..	..	..	25 bales.
Ammunition of all kinds	..	..	..	..	..	2,000 poods.
Special stores and machinery for the Pontoon Company	..	..	..	..	..	1,500

Russian spies in Afghanistan report that Afghan hostility is recommencing against the English at Cabul and on the southern frontier of Afghanistan. They say that the Mullahs are stirring up the frontier tribesmen, and promising them Afghan support, to attack the British with a view to compelling them to stop their railway work on the Cabul River.

There is so much fever and general sickness here on account of the heat that all training of the troops is suspended for the present.

Garrison of Termez:—

	Strength of Garrison.
15th, 14th, 15th, 16th Turkestan Battalions, 1,000 strong each	.. 4,000
Turkestan Suppers	.. 200
Machine-gun Company	.. 200
Termez Fortress Artillery Company	.. 400
Pontoon Company	.. 400
Orenburg Cossack Battery	.. 200
Artillerymen of 1st brigade (field battery)	.. 200
Frontier Guard	.. 500
Total	.. 6,100

Samarkand Report.

August 15.—The old pattern heavy revolvers have been taken from the artillerymen, bandsmen, non-commissioned officers, and officers armed with Government revolvers. In place of these revolvers a smaller pistol is being issued, which loads seven cartridges at a time (i.e., in a magazine or clip.—H. S.).

The Russians are increasing the machine-gun establishment here. I will report details when the matter is completed.

Sirdar Ishak Khan is a frequent guest of the Governor, and continues to be treated with every distinction.

(Signed) H. SMYTH, *Captain,
Military Attaché.*

Mesched, August 29, 1908.

[33443]

No. 590.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 257.)
Sir,

Gulahék, September 11, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 224 of the 9th October, 1907, I have the honour to report that Hashmat-ul-Mulk, who has made repeated efforts throughout the winter and spring to obtain the joint Governorship of Seistan and Kain, took advantage, about the beginning of last month, of the accessibility of the Shah's entourage to bribery, to recommence his intrigues for that purpose. At the return of the Hashmat to those regions must almost certainly result in disorders between his partisans and the supporters of Shaukat-ul-Mulk, I continued, as on previous occasions, to urge on the Persian Government, through the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Hashmat should not be allowed to leave Tehran, representing to them that Shaukat-ul-Mulk had proved himself a satisfactory Governor by the tranquillity and general content which have reigned in Kain for so long, and for a time it seemed likely that my representations would have the desired effect. Hashmat-ul-Mulk, however, was continually increasing the figure of the "pishkesh" he was willing to pay for the Kain appointment, and when at last he reached the sum of 50,000 tomans the Firman was granted to him, presumably because the Court party think it is the largest amount that he can raise. Some 20,000 tomans of this sum was obtained by Hashmat's son, Mohammed Reza, who is his father's Deputy Governor in Seistan, as a loan from the Russian Bank secured on the revenues of the province. I have no reason to suppose that in granting the advance the Russian Bank was actuated by any political motive; on the contrary, M. de Hartwig, to whom I have explained the position, has promised to urge on Ala-es-Sultaneh that the Hashmat should not return to Eastern Persia.

In the meantime His Majesty's Consul in Seistan, who is very anxious to maintain Shaukat-ul-Mulk in the Kain Governorship, had been advising him, so long as there seemed to be a prospect that my efforts here would meet with success, not to allow himself to be led by paying an extortionate "pishkesh;" but although the Kain Governorship has actually now been given to the Hashmat, Shaukat's agents in Tehran have reported to him that it would not be too late to preserve the province to him by the payment of a "pishkesh" of 30,000 tomans. Major Kennion believes that Shaukat is well able to pay a much larger sum than this, but reports that he is unwilling to do so except by raising a part of it on loan, so as to produce the impression that he is financially at the end of his tether, and cannot be further molested. To assist the Shaukat in this, Major Kennion has suggested that it should be taken into consideration whether a guarantee should not be given for the Shaukat's fictitious loan; but to this I have replied that while in the interests of tranquillity I am ready to do what I can to maintain the Shaukat in his present position, I cannot see that our interests are for other reasons so bound up with those of the Shaukat as to justify our guaranteeing a loan for him, more especially as since the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention of last year the conflict of political interests has practically ceased in those regions. It appears to me also that if, as Major Kennion believes, the Shaukat can command a much more considerable sum than the 30,000 tomans above mentioned, he should have no difficulty in obtaining a fictitious loan without any assistance from us.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

[33392]

No. 591.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 408.)
Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 18, 1908.

IN conversation with M. Tcharykoff this afternoon, the question of the Turco-Persian frontier was mentioned, and he expressed his satisfaction that the Turkish troops were now being withdrawn from the localities which they had occupied in Persian territory. I asked him whether he had, during my absence in the country, heard anything further as to the presentation of the identic communication to the Persian Government on the subject, and he said that he considered that the present moment was an opportune one for delivering it. As the two Governments were urging the Shah to issue a declaration as to the elections and the convocation of the Assembly, it would have a good effect to show that they had at the same time been instrumental in procuring the removal of a cause of alarm and annoyance to the Persian Government. He was desirous that no undue delay should occur in acquainting the Shah and the Persian Government with the satisfactory results which had attended the steps which the two Governments had taken in a question closely affecting the interests of Persia, and that the communication should not become too belated. I told M. Tcharykoff that it seemed to me personally that his views were reasonable, and that I would inquire of you whether you would be disposed to give effect to them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[33394]

No. 592.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 410.)
Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 18, 1908.

I TOLD M. Tcharykoff to-day that I was commissioned to suggest to him that the Shah might be pressed to give a reply to the identic communication which had been made to him by the Russian and British Representatives at Tehran in respect to a declaration on his part that he would hold the elections and convoke the Assembly at the dates fixed. M. Tcharykoff said that he saw no objection to such a step, but that he would be glad if I would write him a line on the subject, and that he would then give me a definite reply. His Excellency then proceeded to mention certain alleged actions on the part of some subordinate British officials in Persia which were hardly in consonance with the views of either of the two Governments of Russia and Great Britain or of the two Legations. He said that he had already telegraphed to M. Poklewski to speak to you on the subject, and so it is unnecessary for me to repeat the allegations which he made. I told him that as my Government were in possession of the complaints which he had to make it was of no avail for me to speak on them, though I did not believe that Mr. Churchill could have circulated misleading, or, indeed, any, reports as to the communication which had been made to the Shah; and that I was unaware that the French Vice-Consul had accompanied the British Vice-Consul to the camp of the Commander of the Shah's troops.

M. Tcharykoff remarked that it was most unfortunate that the fact of a communication having been made to the Shah had leaked out into the English press, as it naturally placed the Shah in an embarrassing position. He wished, however, to tell me that, at a recent review which, at His Majesty's invitation, M. de Hartwig had attended, the Shah had assured the latter that he fully intended to issue very shortly a declaration in the sense desired, as he was confident of mastering the difficulties at Tabreez "in a few days." M. Tcharykoff observed that this was satisfactory so far as it went, but nevertheless he had telegraphed to M. de Hartwig to thank the Shah for the assurances which he had given, and to express the hope that the declaration would in fact be issued within a few days. He had left it to M. de Hartwig to suggest that it would be better not to await the pacification of Tabreez, as to which he was not so optimistic as His Majesty, but to promulgate his decision to hold the elections for all parts of Persia with the exception of the above-mentioned town. It was clear that until some order was restored in Tabreez no elections could be held, and it was possible that an immediate declaration on the part of the Shah would assist towards the establishment of peaceable conditions in that town. At the same time, the exclusion of

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5 K

Tabreez would remove all doubts that the Shah was announcing his determination to fulfil his promises merely under the pressure of fear of the revolutionaries. He had left it to the discretion of M. de Hartwig to make the above suggestion, as, being on the spot, he was the best judge of its opportuneness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[33398]

No. 593.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 414. Confidential.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 21, 1908.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your despatch No. 281 of the 8th instant, relative to the question of establishing a British school at Tehran, and you were good enough to ask for my opinion as to the view which the Russian Government might take of such a project.

I would submit that no step should be taken in furtherance of the project until the views of the Russian Government have been solicited, as I think that it is an open question whether they might not regard the proposal as an infringement of the Anglo-Russian Convention. I see no objection, however, against my sounding, with your permission, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the subject; and I would propose to explain that a German school has been established at Tehran, and that in order to counteract the consequent spread of German influence the establishment of a British, following on the institution of a French, school might prove an effective agent. The fear of the development of German influence is, it is true, very present to the mind of the Russian Government, but I have some doubts whether they might not prefer, notwithstanding, that a British school, if one is to be established, should be set up in the south of Persia, either in the British or in the neutral zone. Should they raise objections to a British school being instituted in the Russian zone, it would, I venture to submit, be difficult for us to resist such objections. I could not state positively what is likely to be the view of the Russian Government; and I would be careful in broaching the subject to the Ministry to give my proposal the appearance rather of a suggestion than of a decided wish on the part of His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[33405]

No. 594.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 421.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 22, 1908.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 282 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that I told M. Tcharykoff this afternoon that I wished to mention to him a matter, perhaps of past history, but in regard to which it was desirable to remove any misapprehensions which might exist in the mind of the Russian Government. I said that I referred to the asylum which had been taken by a number of refugees in the village of Gulahek. I gathered that M. de Hartwig had at one time the impression, not that Mr. Marling had encouraged the arrival of the refugees, as this was manifestly absurd, but that perhaps the latter had not been sufficiently firm in expediting their departure. I had had an opportunity of reading a despatch from Mr. Marling on the subject, and it was clear that he had to deal with an exceedingly difficult problem. Several roads lead into Gulahek, and Mr. Marling could not possibly with the small force at his disposal guard all these roads, and, therefore, the refugees came into the village or the Legation grounds in considerable numbers. Mr. Marling and his staff had used every possible means of persuasion, threats, or advice to induce these people to leave, and eventually he was successful. But I begged him not to imagine that it was at all agreeable to Mr. Marling to have these troublesome intruders; he was anxious that none should come, and was still more anxious that they should leave. He had acted with all possible promptitude and firmness.

M. Tcharykoff was evidently not desirous to discuss the question. He said he perfectly understood the difficult position of Mr. Marling, and appreciated his course

of action; but the matter was now over, and the two Legations were now on a friendly footing. As I saw that he wished to get off the question, and as I had said all that seemed to be necessary, I passed on to other subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[33406]

No. 595.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 422.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, September 23, 1908.

I INFORMED M. Tcharykoff yesterday that a reply had been received from the Shah to the identic communication which had been made to him as to the convocation of the Assembly, &c., but that it was of a vague and unsatisfactory character. I had received instructions to inquire of him whether, in these circumstances, he did not consider it desirable to take some steps towards obtaining some more definite and satisfactory assurances.

M. Tcharykoff said that the written reply which had been received by the Russian Minister was also unsatisfactory, but that a verbal message had also been sent, stating that the Shah intended to issue a declaration in accordance with the advice which had been given him. M. Tcharykoff considered that it was quite possible that the Shah, in view of preserving his own dignity, had been guarded and cautious in his written reply, and that the verbal message was intended to be explanatory of the written communication. It would, in these circumstances, perhaps be desirable to wait for a few days to see if the Shah acted up to his assurances, and not to exercise any further pressure for the moment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

[33636]

No. 596.

Mr. M. Ellinger to Foreign Office.—(Received September 28.)

Dear Mr. Mallet,

28, Oxford Street, Manchester, September 26, 1908.

FOR your guidance I hand you inclosed a copy of my to-day's letter to Mr. Arthur Wilson Fox, together with copy of the extract therein referred to.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 596.

Mr. M. Ellinger to Mr. A. Wilson Fox.

Dear Mr. Wilson Fox,

September 26, 1908.

WITH reference to the letter to hand yesterday from Mr. Clarke, I will try and arrange to call upon you early next week and will make a definite appointment later.

In the meantime, I am pleased to be able to inform you that our efforts, in conjunction with those of Mr. Marling, have been so far successful that the Mouin has now written us that he would be willing to form a Company upon lines which he indicates, but that a condition precedent to the formation of the Company is the receipt of satisfactory assurances of protection to be afforded to him and his sons by His Majesty's Government. It appears to me that if a Company with limited liability were registered in this country for the purpose of acquiring oxide on the Island of Ormuz, His Majesty's Government would give absolute protection to the property of the Company and the Persian Government could not touch the oxide nor the shares in the Company, and that there would be no danger of the Concession being revoked or interfered with at the pleasure of the Persian Government, because His Majesty's Government would not allow it. Moreover, in the opinion of the solicitors we have consulted, if any attempt were made by the Persian Government to interfere with the ownership of the shares acquired in this Company the Persian shareholders would have the protection of the English law behind them, and no English Company could be

required to pay any regard whatever to an attempt made by an autocratic Government merely at its pleasure, and without any reference to the properly constituted laws and legal Tribunals of Persia to arbitrarily deprive the Persian shareholders or their successors of their shares, and that the property in such a case would be absolutely secure to them and their heirs.

Now, if this be so, and if the Mouin and his five sons enter into an engagement with the Company to mine oxide in the Island of Ormuz, and to place it f.o.b. steamers, would His Majesty's Government not be in a position to give assurances as to the protection of their lives and persons against any attempt of the Persian Government, arbitrarily and without reference to the properly constituted laws and legal Tribunals of the country to autocratically interfere or threaten their safety, so as to prevent them from carrying out the obligations into which they had entered? I think if assurances on lines of this description could be given, coupled with assurances as to general protection to be given unofficially by His Majesty's Legation in case of need, the Mouin's views on this point would be satisfied, and we could then proceed to the consideration of the commercial aspects of the matter. I would suggest that when I meet you we should endeavour to procure the assistance of Sir Richmond Ritchie, whose advice upon this point would be of considerable value, and for your convenience I am sending you a copy of this letter, which you can hand over to the India Office, if you so desire, and I also send a copy to Mr. Mallet direct for the information of the Foreign Office.

As regards the commercial side of the question, I think the best plan would be to put you now in full possession of the Mouin's ideas, so that you may have an opportunity of considering the matter before we meet; and for this purpose, and in confidence, I give you an extract of what he writes in reference to the Company, of which nothing must be disclosed to Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., or others.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) M. ELLINGER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 596.

Haji Aga Mohamed Dehdashty Mouintujar to Messrs. Ellinger and Co.

(Extract.)

Tehran, September 12, 1903.

I SEND you a scheme for the formation of a Company, which I hope will suit those who wish to take part in the Company. I have done all I can to make the conditions easy. I will myself take part in the Company, so that the other shareholders may be certain that I will spare no efforts in seeing that things go well in so far as regards the delivery of the oxide, &c. If this scheme fails I seriously doubt whether you can form a Company. My principal object is to have the protection of the British Government to safeguard my rights. Without this, you know quite well I have never wished to make a contract for any length of time. It would be well for you first to have an interview with your Foreign Office, with a view to obtaining from this Department written assurances of protection for me.

If a Company is formed with a cash capital of 100,000*l.* I will provide one-third of the capital as follows: 5,000*l.* in the names of each of my five sons, making 25,000*l.*, and the balance in my own name. I wish my sons to be shareholders in this Company, so that they may have the protection of the British Government. It is further desirable that the contract of sale should be in the name of my son Aga Mohamed Rahim Moaventujar and of his son Aga Mohamed Reza, and any document signed by him is to be considered as bearing my own signature; but if this arrangement causes any inconvenience I would sign the contract by procuration in the names of Aga Mohamed Rahim Moaventujar and Aga Mohamed Reza.

If other conditions occur to me I will write them before signature of the contract.

As regards your commission, 2,000*l.* cash and 5 per cent. on the sale of the oxide is sufficient.

In addition to the contract of sale there must be a supplementary contract freeing me from responsibility in case the Persian Government should take away my Concession or prevent me loading.

In view of the fact that you and Mr. Marling both advise me to form a Company, I am inclined to do so, and set forth herewith the conditions which I propose as a basis for the formation of such a Company:—

(a.) The Company to buy 120,000 tons oxide at 42*s.* 6*d.* per ton f.o.b., to be delivered in equal annual quantities of 6,000 tons. The Company to have the monopoly for Europe and delivery of the whole of the 120,000 tons to be taken within the twenty years.

(b.) I and my son participate in the Company to the extent of one-third, contributing one-third of the capital and participating to that extent in the profits and losses.

(c.) Should the annual consumption of the oxide exceed 6,000 tons in any one year, I will furnish such excess quantity up to and not exceeding 2,000 tons at half the price realized by the sale of such excess quantity, always provided that my half share shall not be less than 25*s.* per ton.

(d.) The total quantity to be delivered in any one year shall not exceed 8,000 tons; that is, 6,000 tons bought by the Company at 42*s.* 6*d.* and 2,000 tons to be provided by me on the conditions set forth in paragraph (c).

(e.) Should the Company succeed in selling any one year more than 8,000 tons, the price for any quantity in excess of the said 8,000 tons shall be a matter of arrangement between the Company and myself.

(f.) The oxide is to be delivered as usual by me f.o.b. steamer at Ormuz. The oxide is to be mined exclusively from the Ormuz mines, and I am not to be held responsible for the quality of the oxide.

(g.) Any quantity of which delivery is required in any one year over and above the 6,000 tons bought at 42*s.* 6*d.* under the contract between the Company and myself must be for delivery to the consumers within the same year, and may not be warehoused.

(h.) The Company may raise the cash amount required of 100,000*l.* by loan at the rate of interest of 6 per cent. annum, the loan to be repaid during the currency of the twenty years by annual payments of 5,000*l.*

(i.) The Company can alternately provide the cash (100,000*l.*) required by its own capital without having recourse to a loan.

(j.) The Company is to be a Limited Company and to have its registered offices in London. All the shareholders, without any exception, must be under the protection of His Majesty's Government. In case of disputes, such disputes must be regulated by the English Courts.

(k.) The cost of mining the oxide is to be paid by the vendor, as likewise the cost of putting the cargo f.o.b. at Ormuz.

(l.) The Company is to buy 6,000 tons per year at 42*s.* 6*d.* per ton, making a total value of 12,750*l.*, of which amount 5,000*l.* is to be appropriated towards repayment of the capital sum of 100,000*l.*, 3,000*l.* for interest, and the remainder 4,750*l.* to be paid to the vendor, as likewise half the amount realized by the sale of the 2,000 tons or any portion thereof, of which delivery may be taken in any year in excess of the contract quantity of 6,000 tons.

(m.) The Company to be liquidated at the termination of twenty years, after which time any new arrangement must be by mutual agreement, and the shareholders of the Company shall have no preferential rights or any further claim on the oxide.

(n.) The Moaventujar agrees to pay Messrs. Ellinger and Co., their agents, 2,600*l.* commission on the 100,000*l.* received in cash, and Messrs. Ellinger and Co. are further to receive 5 per cent. commission on the annual sales of the oxide during the twenty years.

(o.) Should the 100,000*l.* be raised by loan, the amount to be repaid annually until the loan is liquidated with interest.

(p.) If the Company, instead of raising the 100,000*l.* by loan, provides this money by its own capital, the vendor will contribute one-third of the amount as his share.

(q.) The British Government is to undertake, in case of need, the protection of the Moaventujar, so that he may always be able to carry out his obligations in the Island of Ormuz.

Note.—With reference to clause (l), the Mouin has evidently calculated 3,000*l.* as being the interest payable at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum on the sum of 100,000*l.*, and this mistake we shall point out to him.

As regards clause (n), the remuneration which the Mouin proposes shall be paid to us is, in our opinion, inadequate, and in laying these conditions for the proposed Company before you we reserve all our rights as regards further discussion of this point.

[33651]

No. 597.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

St. Petersburg, September 28, 1908.

M. TCHARYKOFF tells me that the document containing the Shah's Proclamation is contradictory, obscure, and ornate. One passage says that a new Electoral Law will be issued on the 14th November, and another mentions the same date for the convocation of the Assembly.

M. Tcharykoff expressed himself perfectly ready to join in any steps which His Majesty's Government might desire to take with a view to the elucidating the question of the Proclamation.

[33637]

No. 598.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 278.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 28, 1908.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Vali of Mosul has informed His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that place that he believes that the Vith Army Corps have not received instructions for the complete evacuation of Pasveh, as a battalion remains at each of the following places: Bane, Mamure, Serdasht, and Pasveh.

[33545]

No. 599.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 321.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 28, 1908.

SITUATION at Tabreez. In continuation of my telegram No. 319 of the 26th instant, an ineffectual bombardment of the town continued during Thursday and Friday.

The Shah's forces will suffer from the cold weather which has now set in.

[33749]

No. 600.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

Board of Trade, September 25, 1908.

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, inclosing print of a despatch from His Majesty's Representative at Tehran, with accompanying report to the Government of India by the British Resident in the Persian Gulf dealing with various matters affecting British commercial interests in that region.

With reference thereto, I am to say that the Board are disposed to concur in Major Cox's suggestion as to the desirability of establishing a Vice-Consulate at Lingah, especially in view of German commercial activity in that vicinity. It will be seen from the accompanying Table that, as a consequence of the transference of a large portion of the pearl and shell trade to the neighbourhood of Bahrein, the trade of the port has considerably declined during the last ten years, and with it the Anglo-Indian share. It is still considerable, however, and the entrances and clearances of shipping (mostly British) tend to increase. The Board assume that any appointment which may be decided upon will be made in concert with the Indian Government.

I am also to suggest, for the consideration of Sir E. Grey, whether a Consular officer at Debeli, to which much of the trade formerly done at Lingah has been transferred, and also whether the Political Resident at Bahrein might be assisted by a paid Vice-Consul.

With regard to Major Cox's observations respecting the Persian Treaty Tariff, I am to refer to the fact that this Tariff is in the main that which was appended to the Russo-Persian Treaty, this having been adopted as the basis of the Tariff side of the

negotiations leading up to the existing Anglo-Persian Treaty. In view, therefore, of the present understanding with Russia regarding Persia, the Board think that His Majesty's Government would probably hesitate to make advances to Persia in the direction of embarking upon a new negotiation—however desirable it may be to secure some alteration of the Tariff provisions—without first coming to an agreement with Russia upon the matter. The question whether circumstances are ripe for such action is one for the consideration of Sir E. Grey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR WILSON FOX.

Inclosure in No. 600.

TRADE and Shipping of Lingah 1895-6 and 1905-6, distinguishing the British Share thereof.

					Total.	Of which—	
						United Kingdom.	British Indian.
TRADE.							
Imports—					£	£	£
1895	..	..	..	..	587,000	1,000	225,000
1896	..	..	..	..	425,000	*	156,000
1905	..	..	..	..	103,000	15,000	66,000
1906	..	..	..	..	163,000	11,000	127,000
Exports—							
1895	..	..	..	..	511,000	3,000	260,000
1896	..	..	..	..	498,000	2,000	272,000
1905	..	..	..	..	66,000	*	42,000
1906	..	..	..	..	95,000	*	61,000
Total trade—							
1895	..	..	..	..	1,098,000	4,000	485,000
1896	..	..	..	..	923,000	2,000	428,000
1905	..	..	..	..	169,000	15,000	108,000
1906	..	..	..	..	258,000	11,000	188,000
SHIPPING.							
Entered—					Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1895	..	..	..	..	127,000	98,000	..
1896	..	..	..	..	129,000	97,000	..
1905	..	..	..	..	97,000	82,000	..
1906	..	..	..	..	137,000	115,000	..
Cleared—							
1895	..	..	..	..	95,000	67,000	..
1896	..	..	..	..	107,000	74,000	..
1905	..	..	..	..	62,000	50,000	..
1906	..	..	..	..	137,000	115,000	..
Total—							
1895	..	..	..	..	222,000	165,000	..
1896	..	..	..	..	236,000	171,000	..
1905	..	..	..	..	159,000	132,000	..
1906	..	..	..	..	274,000	230,000	..

NOTE.—Compiled from various Consular Reports.

* Less than 1,000L.

[33716]

No. 601.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

India Office, September 28, 1908.

WITH reference to the telegram from the Viceroy of the 14th instant, as to the Governorship of Kain, I am directed to inclose copy of papers on the subject, which have been received by mail from the Government of India.

It is understood that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tebran has received all the telegrams sent to the Government of India on the subject by the Consul in Seistan. In these circumstances, Lord Morley would be glad to know whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs considers it necessary that any action should be taken in connection with the Viceroy's telegram.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 5, 1908.*
FOLLOWING sent to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran:—

"(No. 76.)

"Your telegram No. 37 of 23rd July: Kain Governorship.

"Shaukat received two telegrams from Mirza Baba and Hassan Khan, who are his two agents in Tehran, saying that Hashmat-ul-Mulk has given Shah, through Amir Bahadur, a promissory note, backed by Arbab Jamshid, to pay 50,000 tomans in one month, and that Shaukat cannot retain Governorship unless he pays 25,000 to 30,000 tomans. Would it be possible to ascertain if his agents are speaking the truth? In view of your telegram, I have repeated my advice to him not to pay bribe."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 7, 1908.*
FOLLOWING sent to His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran:—

"(No. 77.)

"August 7, 1908.

"Please see my telegram No. 76 of 5th August: Kain Governorship.

"Shaukat has telegraphed to his agent to represent that since he has had Governorship over 200,000 tomans, in addition to the revenue, have been paid by him; that he had preserved order during times of disturbance; and that he had given satisfaction to people and foreign Representatives. The reward of loyal service, he continues, is that he is threatened with loss of Governorship on Hashmat-ul-Mulk offering a bribe of 50,000 tomans.

"He concludes by saying that he is unable to give more bribes."

(Repeated to Government of India and Major Sykes.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 10, 1908.*
HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, telegraphed as follows on the 9th August:—

"(No. 40.)

"Shaukat: Your telegrams Nos. 76 and 77—

"Reports seem to be true; but Hashmat-ul-Mulk has no ready money to pay Amir Jung, and cannot borrow it. Russian Bank has refused to lend it, and Russian Legation is not giving him any encouragement. I propose to send Hashmat-ul-Mulk a warning."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 11, 1908.*
FOLLOWING sent to Tehran:—

"(No. 80.)

"Your telegram No. 40 of 9th August: Kain Governorship.

"Mirza Baba telegraphed to Shaukat on 9th that he had seen representative of Minister with reference to Shaukat's telegram (my telegram No. 97 of 7th August), but it was necessary for Shaukat to pay 22,000 tomans immediately to Shah, Minister of the Interior, and Minister of War. He further said that Shaukat would be ruined altogether if he was supported by the British. Shaukat will continue to act on my advice not to pay. People of Birjand are getting up a telegraphic Petition to the Shah, which I am authorizing Howson to send."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 5 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 13, 1908.*
HIS Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, telegraphs as follows on 13th August:—

"(No. 42.)

"Please see your telegram No. 80.

"Hashmat has been refused assistance by Arbib Jamshid, and has only succeeded in raising 20,000 tomans of the 80,000 tomans demanded of him. I think Hashmat has little chance of regaining Kain, and is only being squeezed."

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 6 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, August 23, 1908.*
KAIN Governorship.

Following sent to Legation as No. 83 and repeated to Meshed:—

"Your telegram No. 42 of the 13th instant.

"A telegram received by Shaukat from Mirza Baba stated that Hashmat-ul-Mulk had been definitely refused Governorship, but repeated demand for money.

"The Shaukat now thinks of sending 5,000 to 10,000 tomans to Shah.

"I am letting him know that it is due to British Legation that he has not been earned out, and that I do not wish to dissuade him from making the Shah a peace-offering if he thinks it advisable now to do so."

Inclosure 7 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Camp, vid Robat, August 28, 1908.*
FOLLOWING telegram sent to His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, as No. 85 and repeated to Major Sykes:—

"Kain Governorship.

"Report received from Dankes states that money has been urgently demanded from the Deputy Governor by Hashmat-ul-Mulk, and that Russian Bank has given a loan to former.

"Further details will be obtained if possible."

Inclosure 8 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Birjand, via Robat, August 30, 1908.

FOLLOWING sent to Tehran:—

“(No. 87.)

“My telegram No. 80 of 11th August: Kain Governorship.

“Reply has been received to people's telegram.

“It merely states that satisfactory arrangements will be made.

“Answer is read to signify that Shaukat will be replaced, as no assurance is given that he will be retained.

“Position is that Shaukat does not want to pay heavily to secure Governorship for himself against an outsider, but he is bound to go to any length to prevent Hashmat-ul-Mulk coming, which would ruin him and his supporters.

“Shaukat is now remitting 5,000 tomans by telegraph, and he will send more to avoid second of above alternatives unless I can give him some assurance.

“It would be of political advantage to us and of great assistance to Shaukat if I could tell him—

“1. That Legation will at any rate prevent Hashmat-ul-Mulk coming.

“2. They will endeavour to secure Shaukat in Governorship.

“Is there any objection to this?”

(Repeated to Consul-General, Khorassan.)

Inclosure 9 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Camp, via Robat, August 31, 1908.

FOLLOWING addressed to Tehran, and repeated to Meshed:—

“(No. 88.)

“August 31, 1908.

“My telegram No. 85 of 28th August: Kain Governorship.

“I am informed that loan, which is being repaid from revenue receipts, amounted to 20,000 tomans and was for Seistan revenue.

“Imperial Bank of Persia was first asked for loan of 10,000 tomans, but refused.

“If the loan was sought from a business point of view, I would point out that Imperial Bank of Persia ought to have made it.

“If, on the other hand, it was not, the inference is that it has been made with a political object.

“It has a political effect whatever its object was, and it seems questionable whether it ought to have been made without reference to us.

“See also diaries dated the 5th and 7th February and the 22nd and 31st March.”

Inclosure 10 in No. 601.

Major Kennion to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Camp, via Robat, September 1, 1908.

FOLLOWING telegram No. 46, dated the 31st August, received from Tehran:—

“Your telegram No. 87.

“I cannot undertake to prevent the appointment of Hashmat-ul-Mulk to the Kain Governorship, but will make every effort to do so and also to maintain Shaukat in his present position.”

(Repeated to Major Sykes.)

[33769]

No. 602.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

India Office, September 28, 1908.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, asking for the views of the Secretary of State for India on the Memorandum of the Russian Government of the 15th ultimo in regard to the scheme propounded to them by the British Government for the joint construction of a railway from Mohammerah to Julfa.

2. As regards the question of cost, the Russian Government point out that Persia is unable to provide funds, and that the state of their own finances does not allow them to find capital, but they are ready to meet the proposal made to them if the financial difficulty can be settled with the help of His Majesty's Government.

3. Coming to the question of the steps to give effect to the scheme, the Russian Government consider that the question of a Railway Concession should be settled simultaneously with that of the loan, which they appear to assume it will shortly be necessary to make to the Persian Government. They are willing to release the Persian Government from the undertaking to grant no Railway Concession till after the year 1910.

4. As regards the lines to be constructed in their sphere, the Russian Government consider that Tehran should be connected with the Julfa-Mohammerah line, and also with Resht and Enzeli. They further contemplate the construction of a line from Askabad to Meshed. They state that the order in which these lines are to be constructed should be such as to meet Russian interests, and that the question of the rates on the line to Mohammerah must be so regulated as not to injure the commercial and financial position established by Russia in her sphere.

5. The paramount difficulty, in Lord Morley's opinion, is that of finance. His objections to the principle of contributing from Indian revenues to the cost of British political and commercial enterprise in Persia are well known to Sir E. Grey. Further, the present financial position in India renders it impracticable for the Secretary of State in Council to provide funds at present either by loan, guarantee, or otherwise, for expenditure on any scheme of railway construction in Persia. If the Russian proposal is to be entertained in its present form it will therefore be for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to decide whether British revenues can afford the cost.

6. As regards the question of the possibility of a loan to Persia, which is raised by the Russian Memorandum, I am to take this opportunity to say that the balances of the Home Treasury of the Government of India have been so seriously depleted by the recent reduction of the sales of bills on India and other causes, that it will not be practicable to provide from them, as was done in the case of former loans, either the whole or part of any sum that His Majesty's Government may decide to advance to the Persian Government. The necessary funds would therefore have to be provided by the British Exchequer, as the Secretary of State in Council would not be justified in borrowing for the purpose.

7. There is the further difficulty to be considered in connection with the railway question that it has not yet been ascertained for certain that the construction of the proposed line is practicable from the engineering point of view. The evidence taken by the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence showed that not only have no surveys been made, but that there has not been even such an examination of the country through which the line would run as to enable even the roughest forecast, either of the cost or of the alignment to be followed, to be made; nor have we, so far as Lord Morley is aware, any information as to the cost of the lines proposed in the Russian sphere.

8. Lord Morley's view on the general question, as at present advised, is that it is impracticable to take into consideration the question of immediate construction. The most that could be contemplated would, in his opinion, be to obtain jointly with Russia pledges from the Persian Government, which would make it impossible for any third Power to obtain Concessions for railways. But it would have to be clearly stipulated that His Majesty's Government are not pledged to actual construction till the development of Persia makes it possible for the scheme to be financed on sound lines.

9. I am to draw Sir E. Grey's attention to the bad effect that would be produced

on public opinion in India and Afghanistan if it were believed that the Russian Government intended to make the line to Meshed, referred to in their Memorandum. I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[33730]

No. 603.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

India Office, September 28, 1908.

I AM directed by Viscount Morley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 21st instant, in which you state that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs considers that the acquisition of the Ahwaz-Borasjun-Mohammerah telegraph line is of greater importance to British interests than the completion of the proposed exchange of control of telegraph lines with Russia, and that the solution of the former question should be expedited even at the cost of some delay in that of the latter.

In reply, I am to inform you that Lord Morley concurs in Sir E. Grey's opinion, and will cause instructions to be sent to the Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department at Tehran to conduct his negotiations on the lines indicated.

A copy of a note on the subject by the Director-in-chief, Indo-European Telegraph Department, is inclosed herewith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 603.

Note by Mr. Kirk.

MY information is that the Persian Minister of Telegraphs is not inclined to favour the proposal to make over the charge of the Meshed-Tehran line to the Russians. He stated to the Director of Telegraphs at Tehran that any negotiations with regard to it would be likely to take a long time before anything could be settled. He appears, however, to be willing to recommend the making over of the control of the Borasjun-Ahwaz line to the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and this transfer is much the more important one for us to obtain. It seems in every way advisable that action should be taken as shown in the last paragraph of the Foreign Office letter, and instructions might be given me to act as proposed, and send the necessary orders to the Director at Tehran.

(Signed) H. A. KIRK.

September 23, 1908.

[33699]

No. 604.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

India Office, September 28, 1908.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 21st instant regarding the Red Oxide Concession on the Island of Sirri, I am directed by Viscount Morley to inform you that he concurs in the proposal of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to authorize the insertion of the words "and on conditions" in the communication which it is proposed to make to the Persian Government, and to approve the advice which Mr. Marling suggests that he should give to the agent of Messrs. Hadji Ali Akbar and Sons in Tehran.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

[33754]

No. 605.

Messrs. Ph. Ziegler and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received September 29.)

Sir,

Manchester, September 28, 1908.

REFERRING to the correspondence which has passed between us on the subject of the disturbances in Tabreez, our friends write us in the mail to hand to-day confirming definitely what Mr. Walter Flinn told Mr. Lister in conversation at the Foreign Office on the 28th ultimo, namely, that the Russian Consul has actually handed in a claim on behalf of a Russian subject whose client's place had been plundered of everything contained in it.

In your communication of the 9th instant you were good enough to inform us that Mr. Marling had been instructed to ascertain whether such a claim had been presented by the Russian Government on behalf of their subjects who have incurred such losses in Tabreez. May we now venture to inquire whether you have up to the present confirmation of this fact. Our friends in Tabreez are naturally very anxious to know how they stand, and, therefore, any information you may be good enough to give us bearing on the position will be greatly valued by, Sir, your, &c.

(Signed) PH. ZIEGLER AND Co.

[33773]

No. 606.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 279.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 29, 1908.

I HAVE received a telegram from Mr. Consul-General Wratislaw, dated the 24th instant, informing me that there has been lately a considerable reduction of Turkish troops on the frontier. The Turks have withdrawn a battery from Tergavar. He reports the departure of Yaver Pasha for Van, but states that the Turkish troops still remain in occupied districts.

[33790]

No. 607.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 322.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, September 29, 1908.

PENDING negotiations to obtain an equitable settlement, which are being carried on through the Russian Consul-General, fighting has ceased at Tabreez.

The Shah's troops have fired on and robbed a French officer who was proceeding to Urumia, and the post between Tabreez and Urumia has been robbed twice.

[30130]

No. 608.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 275.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 29, 1908.

KERMANSIAH Customs. Please refer to your despatch No. 218 of the 14th ultimo.

The Imperial Bank inform us that the Russian Bank have encashed last payment, and they are anxious that their lien on these Customs should now be transferred to those of Bushire.

You should press the Persian Government to agree to this arrangement on the ground that for payment of interest on the British loan the security of the Kermanshah Customs has ceased to be available.

[33651]

No. 609.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 277.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 29, 1908.

SHAH'S Proclamation. Sir A. Nicolson's telegram No. 178.

I should be glad to receive your suggestions as to what course to adopt.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg, No. 404.)

[33780]

No. 610.

Memorandum respecting Railway Construction in Persia.

IN a Memorandum of the 15th August the Russian Government give some indications of their attitude regarding railway construction in Persia.

The first paragraph, which is as follows, shows evidence of some misapprehension:—

"Le Gouvernement Britannique ayant proposé au Gouvernement Impérial de procéder d'un commun accord à la construction en Perse de chemins de fer, qui, partant du point terminus du réseau Russe à Djoulfa, arriveraient à Mohammerah, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur d'informer l'Ambassade Royale qu'il accepte cette proposition en principe, et qu'il est prêt à entrer dans un échange de vues avec l'Ambassade concernant les modalités pratiques de la mise à exécution de la dite proposition."

In making proposals to the Russian Government it is understood that His Majesty's Government contemplated *not* actual construction, but rather timely co-operation in earmarking concessions which might otherwise be exploited to the detriment of both Powers.

Any agreement now reached should simply be of a protective character, aiming at the exclusion of third parties, and calculated to assure to Great Britain and Russia a position of vantage whenever the time is ripe for construction, thus avoiding outside competition in enterprises not devoid of political import.

The drawbacks, in existing circumstances, of entering into detail as to the alignment of the railway, the constitution of the Board, the allotment of shares, or the adjustment of Tariff rates are clear; any attempt to settle these matters would be premature, and likely to lead to future embarrassment. For, apart from the uncertainty of the political situation, alike in Turkey and in Persia, there are many factors, now unknown quantities, which cannot fail to exercise a determining influence upon the subject under discussion, such, for instance, as the governing consideration of cost, the absence of all surveys, even of a preliminary character, the results which may attend the operations of the CIL Syndicate in South-West Persia, the ultimate constitution of the Bagdad Railway Company, and the question of whether or not a branch line is constructed to Khamkin. Many developments of this nature must, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, be awaited before a railway from Julfa to Mohammerah can be planned or built with adequate commercial success.

Indeed, it is not altogether impossible that one object of such a railway, viz., to forestall the advent of the Germans, might more effectively be accomplished, in a district with incomparably greater commercial possibilities and minor obstacles to construction, by building a railway from Bagdad to Bassorah along the Tigris Valley. Attention will be directed to some aspects of this question in a separate Memorandum which is in course of preparation.

Dealing now with the several points raised in the Russian *aide-mémoire*, they may conveniently be summarized as follows:—

1. The Russian Government would be prepared to liberate Persia from the anti-Railway Convention.

In existing circumstances the Convention expires on the 11th November, 1910, and it is hardly conceivable that construction could be begun before then.

In this connection it is interesting to note that, in 1902, the Grand Vizier informed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that he had intimated to Count Lamsdorff

that "Persia would not agree to a further renewal of the Agreement, which would expire in 1910."

2. Neither Persia nor Russia can participate in building railways by subscribing capital, but the Russian Government are ready to accept His Majesty's Government's proposal, if the financial side of the question can be solved with British assistance.

Public opinion would of course ridicule the idea of building a railway, of which two-thirds would be in the Russian sphere, at British expense.

3. The question of a loan to the Persian Government is intimately connected with that of a Railway Concession.

Apparently the meaning of this is that a loan is to be made to Persia, on more favourable terms than would otherwise be the case, in return for the grant of a Railway Concession. The upshot of such a provision as this is that a proportionate addition must be made to the cost of the railway, which is to be built at British expense.

Mr. Marling has just reported that he is by no means convinced that the Persian Government are in need of a considerable loan.

4. The lines in the Russian sphere should serve to maintain and develop Russian interests (a) by the chronological order in which they are built; and (b) by manipulation of Tariff rates on the Mohammerah line.

Assuming, solely for purposes of argument, that the financial difficulty had been overcome, His Majesty's Government might meet the Russian Government to a certain extent by agreeing that construction should be carried out from north to south, and not *vice versa*, thus affording prior opportunities to Russian commerce. It would be out of the question to assent to the discrimination of Tariff rates in favour of Russian goods.

Moreover, the influx of British goods which the Russian Government appear to contemplate with anxiety, would be more than outweighed by the advantages Russian trade would derive through connection with the sea.

5. Russia would desire to build branches from Resht, Enzeli, and Tebran. The necessity of a line from Askhabad to Meshed must likewise be considered.

It would perhaps be possible to induce the Russian Government to defer the Askhabad-Meshed line for several years, as it would be sure to evoke great opposition at present in India and Afghanistan. Eventually the Russian and Indian systems are likely to be linked up, but precipitate action such as the construction of a line to Meshed might have the opposite effect of that desired, and lead to a recrudescence of mutual mistrust. As, however, the Russian Government have intimated their views in regard to this line, we might, in replying, state that we consider there are serious objections to raising the question of construction in Eastern Persia at present; that when the time comes a British line might be made from Lingah or Bunder Abbas along the important trade route to Kerman; but that this is an aspect of the question which does not present itself in dealing with the proposals regarding a line from Julfa to Mohammerah.

Perhaps it would be well to prepare a Memorandum for communication to M. Isvolsky, showing the misunderstanding which has arisen, and setting forth the financial difficulties involved in the Russian proposals.

Foreign Office, September 29, 1908.

[33870]

No. 611.

Messrs. Ph. Ziegler and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received September 30.)

Sir,

Manchester, September 29, 1908.

SINCE writing you yesterday, another mail has come in from Tabreez in which our friends inform us that three claims, similar to the one already mentioned, have been accepted by the Russian Consul, who promised to see them put through in the right quarter.

[1599]

We venture to communicate these additional facts to you because it is of vital importance to ourselves and to British trade in general that it should be known in Tabreez that the same degree of protection which is accorded by Russia to her subjects there will also be extended by His Majesty's Government to British subjects, as the Persian merchants would otherwise naturally turn to the Russian importers and abstain from dealing with British firms in view of the possibility of a repetition of troublous times in the future.

We remain, &c.
(Signed) PH. ZIEGLER AND Co.

[33783] No. 612.

Sir G. Louthier to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 280.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, September 29, 1908.*
TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.
My telegram No. 279 of the 29th instant.
One mountain battery and five battalions of infantry are reported by the Vice-Consul to have arrived at Van.

[33872] No. 613.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 323.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, September 30, 1908.*
TIME Shah and Constitution. With reference to telegram No. 178 of the 28th instant from Sir A. Nicolson:
It is, in my opinion, essential that the date for the assembly of the Medjliss and consequently the date of the elections also should be fixed.
In view of the arrival of His Majesty's Minister to-morrow, I hesitate to offer definite suggestions in regard to the electoral law, of which the drafting is the chief difficulty.

[33699] No. 614.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 278.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, September 30, 1908.*
PLEASE refer to your telegram No. 315 of the 21st instant, Sirri Red Oxide Concession.
I concur as to insertion of words suggested by you.

[33047] No. 615.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 305.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September 30, 1908.*
WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 386 of the 27th August, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from the India Office,* inclosing a draft Memorandum of working arrangements as between the British and Russian Governments on the transfer of the control of the Tehran-Meshed line, and of the Khaf-Nasratabad section of the Meshed-Nasratabad telegraph line.

* No. 563.

I have to request your Excellency to communicate a copy of this document to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to discuss it with his Excellency. The only point which appears to have been omitted is that relating to the hours at which the Russian and British signallers should respectively have access to the offices, but this is a matter which could probably be most conveniently arranged by the officials on the spot.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.